

Japanese compound verbs

Compounded elements as suffixes?

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Abstract

The previous classifications of Japanese verb-verb compounds – both syntactic and lexical – are described and their validity is tested in regard to syntax, semantics and lexicon through grammatical tests. Some comment on the possibilities of teaching Japanese compound verbs as suffixes is offered. Some possibilities for further research are suggested.

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Terminology and transcription

Romanization

I will use the Hepburn system of romanization in a modified version to transcribe Japanese words (except for in quotations where the original transcription will be preserved). Instead of macrons double letters are used to indicate long vowels as in *aa*, *ii*, *uu*, *oo*. The segment *ei* is will be transcribed as a vowel sequence even when realised as a long vowel. Palatalised consonants will be indicated with a *y*, as in *kya*, *kyu*, *kyo*, except in the cases of *cha*, *chu*, *cho* and *sha*, *shu*, *sho* (including their voiced equivalents; *ja*, *ju*, *jo*). Geminate consonants are marked as in *yatta*, 'did', with a double consonant. Nasals are always transcribed as *n* regardless of pronunciation.

Typographical conventions

"double quotes":	quotations in running text
'single quotes':	1. translations of Japanese words and sentences 2. technical terms
<i>italics</i> :	1. Japanese words and sentences in running text 2. titles of books
- hyphen:	morpheme boundary (also used to indicate the boundaries between individual verb stems in compound verbs)
. period	separation of metalanguage words in single glosses
CAPITALS:	grammatical categories

Throughout this paper the term 'infinitive' will be used to describe the inflected form that is usually called *renyookei*, verbal infinitive, conjunctive, or any number of terms. What is meant in this essay by 'infinitive' is the form derived by adding the morpheme *-i* to the stem of a verb (e.g., *yomi*, the verbal infinitive of *yomu*, 'read') for consonant verbs (verbs with a stem that ends with a consonant) or just taking the stem of the verb (for vowel verbs, whose stems end in vowels, naturally). I will use the term 'infinitive' when referring to this form throughout the text to avoid confusion.

Abbreviations

ACC	accusative
ADV	adverbial
CAUS	causative
COND	conditional
COP	copula
DAT	dative
GEN	genitive
HON	honorific
HORT	hortative
IMP	imperative
INF	infinitive
MOD	modal
NOM	nominative
NPAST	non past
POL	polite
PST	past tense
REL	relative
REP	representative
TOP	topic

1. Introduction

Several researchers (for example Shibatani 1990, Kageyama 2001, Fukushima 2005) have long debated whether word formation takes place in the lexical or the syntactic component, or indeed both, in addition to trying to define the conditions under which it does occur. Particularly controversial has been the status of the compound verb as it is an inflected part of speech as opposed to nouns that, in Japanese, do not inflect. Some commonly compounded elements show a great degree of productivity, suggesting at the very least a syntactic quality to their formation. One might ask oneself, when does a compounded word turn into, on one hand, a productive syntactic pattern or, on the other hand, a proper lexical item ready for further compounding. Consider the examples in (1) below.

- (1) a. tsuk-u
stick-NPAST
'stick'
- b. a-u
harmonise-NPAST
'harmonise', 'act reciprocally'

These two verbs are combined forming what seems like a compound verb. *Tsuki* is the infinitive form of *tsuku*.

- (2) tsuk-i-a-u
stick-INF-harmonise-NPAST
'accompany'

This new word may then be further modified. Again, further elements are affixed to the infinitive form, in this case *tsukiai*. In the example the element *dasu* has been suffixed creating what is in this paper generally termed a syntactic compound.

- (3) tsuk-i-a-i-das-u
stick-INF-harmonise-INF-take.out-NPAST
'start keeping someone's company'

The above example of *tsukiau* in (2) is indeed not commonly seen as a compound in modern Japanese, but it is written in the Japanese script exactly like regular verb-verb compounds (i.e., with Chinese characters for the verb stems of each component verb which makes them identical to a series of two verbs), something which is apt to cause some confusion among students of Japanese. In fact, this verb should probably be considered to belong to a group of verb-verb compounds that have at some previous point passed into the lexicon proper. Some other compound verbs, on the other hand, seem to display characteristics that suggest a function of the last component verb as a grammatical marker or suffix (Shibatani 1990). Take the example in (4), for instance.

(4) nak-i-das-u
 cry-INF-take.out-NPAST
 'start crying'

Naku means 'to cry', and *dasu* on its own normally means 'take out' or 'cause to go out'. On the other hand, since the compound verb *nakidasu* means to 'start crying', *dasu* should probably be translated as 'start' instead of the literal meaning of 'take out' in this case.¹ Some degree of grammaticalisation seems to have taken place, causing *dasu* to make a semantic shift from a lexical meaning to a more stylised grammatical one meaning 'to start (doing something)'. The question is whether *nakidasu* and similar compound verbs should be considered proper compounds or simply verb stems modified by a morpheme. These verbs are normally thought of as a class of syntactically formed compound verbs, though some authors exclude them when analysing lexically formed compounds, focusing on verb-verb compounds like *nakisakebu*, 'to cry and scream' (Fukushima 2005).² A problem with classifying highly predictable formations like *nakidasu* as compounds, along with highly idiosyncratic ones such as often is the case with lexical compounds, surfaces when the syntactic components are affixed to words that are already considered compound verbs. Consider (5).

(5) Hanako ga nak-i-sakeb-i-dashi-tara, tomara-na-katta
 Hanako NOM cry-INF-scream-INF-take.out-CON stop-NEG-PST
 'Once Hanako started crying and screaming there was no stopping.'

1 Do note however that I will consistently use the translation 'take out' in metalanguage throughout this paper.

2 To be more specific we can make mention of the fact that Fukushima also excludes a great number of in all probability lexically formed compound verbs.

Nakisakebu is considered to be a lexical compound by other works and it is considered to have this status here also. What is remarkable is that *dasu* is affixed as with any normal, non-compounded verb in a manner very similar to passives and causatives (that is, it affixes to the infinitive form of the verb and has a similar potential arrangement of morphemes affixed to it in turn).

Some may argue that *nakisakebu* and the previously mentioned *tsukiau* are similar in their degrees of lexicalisation and that thus *nakisakebu* should not be considered a compound verb. While this will be discussed later, it is worth mentioning that lexical compounds can always be paraphrased as 'do X and X' or 'to do X by X-ing'. *Nakisakebu* and *uchikorosu* (shoot-kill, 'kill by shooting') is paraphrased as follows.

(6) nai-tari saken-dari suru
cry-REP scream-REP do.NPAST
'To do crying and screaming'

(7) ut-te koros-u
shoot-GER kill-NPAST
'shoot and kill'

It should be noted that such a paraphrase is impossible for *tsukiau*. (See chapter 2 for more detail.)

Over the next chapter I will attempt to provide a thorough description of Japanese compound verbs, summing up the major parts of previous research into the subject. Furthermore, in the latter part of this paper we will attempt to provide a comprehensive list of tools for defining these characteristics as they apply to components of compound verbs and their syntax and semantics. A suggestion in line with Shibatani's (1990) theories that syntactic verbs actually contain suffixes will be given with supporting evidence.

2. Previous research and classification of compound verbs

In the works of various authors compound verbs have been classified and analysed from a mainly word formation oriented point of view. Here will follow an outline of the research and the current debate as conducted in the linguistic community.

2.1 The classes of compound verb

To specify what is meant by the term 'compound verb' in the context of this paper, a comprehensive description of this class of words is in order.

Compound verbs can, as previously stated, be broadly divided into two groups, these being lexically formed compounds on one hand and syntactically formed compounds on the other hand.

Shibatani (1990) and Kageyama (2001) variously classify compound verbs and their subclasses.

Shibatani discusses three categories; the compounds where the first verb is said to modify the second one (here called lexical compounds, in Shibatani's work called V/m - V compounds), compounds where the second verb modifies the first (many of them the aspectual and adverbial compounds that are the main focus of this paper) as V - V/m ('m' should be for 'manner' or 'modifier' if we are to understand Shibatani's terminology correctly) and finally V - V compounds that contain "two verbs that possess an equal level of importance" (Shibatani 1990:246), as Shibatani eloquently puts it. The last category contains what is below in 2.2 referred to as 'alternating lexical compounds'. Some examples of compound verbs in Shibatani's categories include:

V/m - V (the first verb describes the manner of the action): *uchi-korosu* lit. shoot-kill, meaning 'kill by shooting' or 'shoot to death')

V - V/m (the second verb component describes the manner or direction of the action): *tobidasu* (lit. jump-take out, meaning 'jump out')

V - V (both verbs are considered semantically equal and distinct): *naki-sakebu* (lit. cry-scream, meaning 'cry and scream')

Shibatani also states that elements of the V - V/m compounds (e.g. the *-dasu* of *nakidasu*)

are in the process of turning into suffixes, a view I share and will attempt to discuss though this paper. (Shibatani 1990)

Kageyama (2001) defines the two groups as Group A (containing lexical compounds) and Group B (containing syntactic compounds). Kageyama states Lexical Hypothesis espoused by Fukushima (2005) is in conflict with Japanese in trying to explain all word formation as taking place in the lexical component of language without the support of syntactic language processes. Kageyama offers as a counter argument that in Japanese “where one suffix after another is productively added to a verb stem to give rise to more and more complex predicates, as in *tabe-hazime(-ru)* “eat-begin” = “begin to eat,” *tabe-hazime-sase(-ru)* “eat-begin-cause” = “make (someone) begin to eat,”[...]” (italics added by me) the Lexical Hypothesis cannot possibly hold true (Kageyama 2001). While Kageyama posits that the second verb of a syntactic compound behaves like a suffix, Kageyama still states these verbs as on par with lexically formed compounds, albeit formed in the syntactic component. I agree with Kageyama that the Lexical Hypothesis cannot possibly hold up in the face of the evidence provided and will use some of his terminology throughout this paper, although I will later examine the possibility of more directly describing them as suffixes.³

The following two sections will deal with and present a description of lexical compounds and syntactic compounds respectively.

2.2 Lexical compounds

Nakisakebu, 'cry and scream', and *uchikorosu*, 'shoot to death' are examples of lexical compounds in Japanese. To translate these into Western languages a phrasal or particle verb is often needed, or indeed a whole complex predicate (Andersson 2007).

Lexical compounds are special in that they display a high degree of idiosyncrasy and generally speaking are not semantically transparent. For these reasons they often prove hard to decipher for foreigners studying Japanese. Kageyama refers to this group of compound verbs as 'Type A' (Kageyama 2001). Consider the below examples (8)-(10).

(8) bokura wa kare o kurabu kara o-i-dashi-ta

We TOP he ACC club from chase-INF-take.out-PST

'We chased him out of the club.'

3 The Lexical Hypothesis seems extraordinarily weak in the context of compound verbs, which would lead us to question it at large also. Fukushima (2005) explicitly ignores Kageyama's Group B verbs in his attempt to “argue that lexical V-V compound formation in Japanese is lexical”, thus also ignoring the larger perspective on word formation.

(9) Hanako ga doa kara tob-i-dashi-ta
Hanako NOM door from jump-INF-take.out-PST
'Hanako jumped out of the door.'

(10) Taroo ga ji o kak-i-nagut-ta
Taroo NOM characters ACC write-INF-punch-PST
'Taroo wrote characters sloppily.'

In the above examples we see the compound verbs *oi-dasu*, *tobi-dasu* and *kaki-naguru* ('chase away', 'jump out' and 'write sloppily' respectively). These represent common patterns among lexical compound verbs. A number of sub-categories can be discerned within the group of lexical compounds, although the exact nature of them is still under debate. The contribution of this paper is given as the four categories below and is in large based on a combination of Kageyama's and Shibatani's models for defining this class of compound.

Adverbial (I) (the first verb denotes the manner of an action): *uchi-korosu* (lit. shoot-kill, 'shoot to death'), *nage-suteru* (lit. throw-get rid of, 'throw away'), *oi-dasu* (lit. chase-take out, 'chase a person away')

Adverbial (II) (the second verb denotes the manner of an action): *tobi-dasu* (lit. jump-take out, 'jump out'), *hashiri-komu* (lit. run-move inward⁴, 'run into (something)')

Alternating (both verbal actions occur simultaneously): *naki-sakebu* (lit. cry-scream, 'cry and scream'), *nomi-aruku* (lit. drink-walk, 'tour bars')

Aspectual (the verb denotes the start or end of an action): *furi-yamu* (lit. fall (of rain or snow)-stop, 'stop raining/snowing')

It should be noted that the aspectual verbs listed above differ from the syntactic compound verbs in that they are not productive. For example, **tabe-yamu* as 'stop eating' would be ungrammatical, while *tabe-owaru* for the same meaning would be productively formed and thus grammatical, since *yamu* is typically only used to describe meteorological phenomena. Verbs in this sub-category are also very narrow in semantic scope. (See also chapter 4 on Semantic Constraints).

⁴ *Komu* is by many authors considered to be untranslatable. Here *komu* has been translated as 'move inward' since it always seems to describe either literal or metaphoric inward motion. Although it is in all other respects very much alike other lexical compounds, Fukushima excludes it from his analysis. (Fukushima 2005:571-572)

Lexical compounds of first adverbial type given above (marked with the roman numeral I) can be paraphrased as a 'do X and then X' type of sentence. The same is true for the aspectual compound *furi-yamu*. (Shibatani 1990). (11) is an example of such a paraphrase.

- (11) Bokura wa kare o kurabu kara ot-te das-u
 We TOP he ACC club from chase-GER take out-NPAST
 'We will chase and remove him.'

Note that curiously enough the adverbial type II compounds do not allow this paraphrase. Shibatani classifies them in his V – V/m type compounds alongside syntactic compounds that share at least one of their characteristics. Namely, transitivity seems to be secondary in these verbs – had Hanako jumped out of somewhere, the correct form would end with the intransitive verb *deru*, 'go out'.

- (12) *Hanako ga ton-de dashi-ta
 Hanako NOM jump-GER take.out-PST

However, similarly to the adverbial type I compounds, compounds of the alternating subcategory can often be paraphrased by using the representative form ('to do X-ing and X-ing'). Consider (13). (Shibatani 1990)

- (13) Taroo ga nai-tari saken-dari suru
 Taroo NOM cry-REP scream-REP do.NPAST
 'Taroo does crying and screaming'

Some of the verbs belonging to the above categories are idiosyncratic to the point of being exceedingly difficult to understand. A student who knows the verbs *nomu* and *aruku*, meaning 'drink' and 'walk' respectively, has little chance of deciphering the meaning of *nomiaruku*, 'tour bars', without relying heavily on contextual information. While maintaining the original meaning of its component verbs, conventions dictate that *nomiaruku* is typically only usable when touring drinking establishments. Similar characteristics apply to many of the verbs in this class. Semantic shifts from the original meaning of the verbs are rampant among certain groups of lexical verbs and many seem to at some point move into the lexicon less as compound verbs and more as proper lexical items. Some verbs that look like lexical compounds, such as *tsukiau*, have so little in

common with their homophonous non-compounded verbs that they should probably be considered separate lexical items rather than compound verbs. There might be room for at further investigation into the classification of lexical compounds as there are the somewhat regular patterns (especially amongst the adverbials) mixed in among verbs that are idiosyncratic in the extreme, but such falls outside the scope of this paper.

While we shall see later that syntactic compounds lend themselves to compounding processes that can be carried out with a fair degree of precision by even L2 speakers of the language, such is not the case with lexical compounds. Such practices would probably be seen as creative language use at best and incomprehensible utterances at worst.

2.3 Syntactic compounds

According to Kageyama, syntactically formed compounds differ from lexically formed ones in that they are thought of as being formed on the level of syntax and that they display a striking logic when it comes to ordering and semantics (Kageyama 2001). Kageyama names them Type B compounds in contrast to the lexically formed Type A compounds. Shibatani refers to them as V – V/m type compounds. The final verb components of these compounds often express aspectual or adverbial meanings. (Kageyama 2001, Shibatani 1990)

An exhaustive list of morphemes is beyond the scope of this paper, but some examples include the below verbs (or, verbal suffixes as we might decide to call them). Notice that *-dasu* and *-hajimeru* superficially look like transitive verbs, but they affix to intransitive and transitive verb stems equally and can thus be said to be semantically bleached. The same is true for *-sugiru*, which superficially looks intransitive. In fact, none of the suffixes used in productive syntactic compounds seem to distinguish between transitive and intransitive meanings. A look at Makino & Tsutsui (1995) is recommended for a more comprehensive listing of many of the possibly productive morphemes (indeed, their list seems to be the only work actually comprehensively treating these words as productive in any real sense).

sugiru (literal meaning 'pass'): *Sugiru* has been mentioned for and is indeed one of the most commonly taught compound elements in modern Japanese teaching. Affixed to the infinitive form of the base verb, it has the meaning of overdoing the action of the main verb, often with unfortunate results.

dasu (literal meaning 'take out' or 'remove'): *Dasu* is similar to *hajimeru* (see below) in being aspectual and describing the start of an action when affixed to the infinitive form of a verb. It differs

from *hajimeru* in that the action it describes is always instantaneous and very often non-volitional or naturally occurring. *Dasu* also has at least two homophonous equivalents among the lexical verbs (e.g. *oidasu* and *tobidasu*).⁵

wasureru (literal meaning 'forget'): *Wasureru* exists in a very productive form alongside many lexically idiosyncratic verbs. The suffixation of *-wasureru* to the infinitive form of a verb indicates the forgetting of the action described by the main verb.

kakeru (literal meaning 'set'): *Kakeru* originally means 'set' or 'hang (something upon something else)', but when affixed to the infinitive form of a verb it means 'be about to do X' or 'be on the verge of doing X'. Soga terms it “attenuative aspect” (Soga 1983:187).

hajimeru (literal meaning 'begin (something)'): *Hajimeru* differs from *dasu* by being wider in semantic meaning (including being affixable to volitional verbs). Emphasis also seems shifted in a stronger direction for the notion of beginning. Soga describes compounds ending in *hajimeru* as indicating the “inceptive aspect” (Soga 1983:183).

owaru (literal meaning 'end' (both transitive and intransitive)): As the antonym of *hajimeru*, *owaru* denotes the ending of the action described by the main verb. Soga uses the term “conclusive aspect” (Soga 1983:195).

au (literal meaning 'harmonise', 'act reciprocally'): *Au* indicates reciprocity in the verbs action and is generally volitional. Though sometimes mutually beneficial, at other times the action might be neutral in result or even mutually harmful. (Andersson 2007:10)

Syntactic compound verbs share a few characteristics regardless of sub-categorisation. First, they are semantically bleached, but unevenly so. The bleached part is always the latter verb in the compound, while the main verb remains semantically unchanged and is modified by the latter part. Second, syntactic compounds are semantically transparent, and thus a student can deduce the meaning of a previously unknown syntactic compound and even productively construct brand new compound verbs with some degree of accuracy. This productivity shows few if any idiosyncrasies other than that semantically impossible combinations are of course ungrammatical (see 4 Semantic constraints for discussion).

- (14) *tabe-owat-tara, katazuke-te ne!*
eat-finish-CON clean.up-IMP FIN
'Clean up when you finish eating, alright!'

⁵ In fact, some of the lexical verb-verb compounds using *dasu* are fairly regular, prompting the question of whether an adverbial *-dasu* might be extrapolated from them. However, further discussion is refrained from in this paper.

(15) Hanako ga hashiri-dashi-ta
Hanako NOM run-take.out-PST
'Hanako started running.'

(16) Taroo ga tegami o kaki-hajime-ta
Taroo NOM letter ACC write-start-PST
'Taroo started to write a letter.'

Some constraints apply to the morphemes involved in syntactic compounding that are worth noting. The morphemes seem not to be recognisably transitive or intransitive, although they may look like one of the transitivity pairs. In the case of these components they appear in a form homophonous with the transitive verb. The same form is employed regardless of if the meaning of the compound is transitive or intransitive.

It would seem impossible to affix the intransitive version of the verb to achieve a syntactic compound, as in (17).

(17) *Hanako ga naki-de-ta
Hanako NOM cry-go.out-PST
(intended as) 'Hanako started crying'

Compare the example below with the correct form in (18).

(18) Hanako ga naki-dashi-ta
Hanako NOM cry-take.out-PST
'Hanako started crying'

2.4 A new classification? – productive adverbial and aspectual suffixes

Many of the verbs belonging to the syntactically formed group of compound verbs display a degree of semantic bleaching that reminds strongly of grammaticalised elements of language – parts of speech that have gone from being independent lexical items and have become function words and

grammatical markers. What makes it hard for one to state that they might actually be such grammaticalised elements is the fact that they are still for all intents and purposes verbs and as such inflect and behave in a way not becoming of most grammaticalised words. The strong joining with a regular, non-grammaticalised verb also dissuades somewhat from such a classification. However, some counterexamples are to be made.

If one were to ponder the status of *-saseru* and *-rareru* type morphemes in Japanese, one would quickly be forced to conclude that they are suffixes. This is because they cannot stand alone and form a functional predicate. But is the same not true of the highly productive parts of some compound verbs? From a productivity point of view, some of these elements even approach *-saseru* and *-rareru* in productivity. For example, the practice of teaching *-sugiru*, 'to overdo (something)' (originally 'pass', a literal meaning that many students only discover relatively much later), as a suffix is already widespread at teaching institutions and most students of Japanese would probably consider it a suffix in that it can be applied to almost any verb (and indeed, most adjectives as well). Consider (19) and (20).

(19) Boku wa tabe-sugi-ta kara, o-naka ga ita-i
 I TOP eat.INF-pass-PST because HON-stomach NOM painful-NPAST
 'Because I overate, my stomach aches.'

(20) Watashi wa jitensha de haya-ku ik-i-sugi-ta kara,
 I TOP bicycle INST fast-ADV go-INF-pass-PST because
 koron-de kega shi-ta
 fall-GER injury do-PST
 'Because I went too fast on my bike, I fell and hurt myself.'

As well as *-sugiru* we could add *-dasu*, *-hajimeru* and *-kakeru* to the emerging list of productive morphemes. These display the same productivity as *-sugiru*, as can be seen in (21-23).

(21) Senshu ga honruida o ut-te, hashiri-dashi-ta
 player NOM home.run ACC hit-GER run-take.out-PST
 'The player hit a home run and started running.'

(22) Tabe-hajime-mashoo!
eat.INF-begin-POL.HORT
'Let's start eating!'

(23) Ima tabe-kakeru tokoro da kara, haya-ku ki-te yo!
now eat-INF-set place COP because fast-ADV come-IMP EMP
'We are about to eat, so get here quickly!'

Many compound verbs display an ambiguity between two different readings. Of such pairs it can be predicted that one will be lexically formed and the other one syntactically formed. For example, compounds ending in *-wasureru*, literally meaning 'forget', is an example of a group of compound that superficially displays higher degree of idiosyncrasy than the aforementioned examples as to the fact that the interpretation of compounds constructed from an infinitive form and *-wasureru* is not immediately apparent. I would argue that *-wasureru* exists in two versions, one of these being completely semantically transparent, one requiring that a speaker learns the idiosyncrasies of individual compounds. Sometimes this understanding is hampered by the verb being ambiguous between two readings. The syntactic reading of the verbs below is rendered in bold script.

(24) a. ii-wasureru

'forget to say'

b. oki-wasureru (lit. "place-forget")

'mislaid'

c. kaki-wasureru

'forget to write'

d. kiki-wasureru

ambiguous between **'forget to ask'** and 'forget what one has heard'⁶

6 The verb *kiku* can mean either 'ask' or 'hear'/'listen'. The particle usage differs slightly between the forms, but for the intents and purposes of the above example they behave morphologically in the same way as if they had been the same verb. A possible alternate meaning for the syntactic compound would possibly be 'forget to listen'.

e. *shimai-wasureru*

ambiguous between '**forget to put away (a thing)**' and 'forget where one has put away (a thing)'

f. *ne-wasureru* (lit. "sleep-forget")

'oversleep'

g. *mi-wasureru*

ambiguous between '**forget to look (at something)**' and 'forget what one has seen'

The correct analysis of *-wasureru* compounds is probably that they should be placed in both the syntactically and lexically formed groups of compound verbs as there seems to exist two types whereof only the syntactic one displays semantic transparency. This version of *-wasureru* can be considered productive. Below in (25) we find *ki-wasureru* which is not available in dictionaries while still being completely grammatical.

(25) *kooto o ki-wasureta*
coat ACC put.on-forget
'I forgot to put on my coat'

The above sentence is wholly grammatical and this pattern is replicable for any number of verbs. Indeed, the productivity of components of syntactic compounds is well established, especially in the teaching community. The question would be why they have not been discussed as such by authors in the past. One possible reason is that compound verbs (and by extension anything that looks like a compound verb) as we have noted before have mainly been considered in the context of word formation.

Secondly, the analysis made by Bloch (1946) might still wield some influence. In his grammar of Japanese he places all compounds ending with a verb (including post-syntactic compounds such as those of a noun and *suru*, 'do') under the heading 'compound tertiary verbs'. This might be responsible for setting the stage for a collective analysis of these various verbs, while in reality they seem to behave radically different from one another. In Bloch's defense, he also notes that "certain verbal bases, when they appear as the second constituents in tertiary formations, have a meaning different from that of the underlying verb" when analysing *naki-dasu* among other verb-verb compounds that we would classify as syntactic compounds. (Bloch 1946:314)

3. Tests of compounded elements as suffixes

In this section I will through testing see if the theory of syntactic compound elements stands up to actual grammatical testing. I will point out how syntactic compounds differ radically from lexical compounds and how they as a result of that might be considered productive morphemes instead. First, paraphrasing will be discussed as a possible tool for identifying syntactic compounds with morphemes ready to be lifted out and organised into a system. Furthermore, the phenomenon of tertiary compounding will be explored, as it is a particular characteristic of syntactic compound elements. Lastly, the concept of a 'sandwiching operation' will be explained and applied to these compound verbs.

3.1 Paraphrasing

As previously mentioned, lexical compounds can almost always be paraphrased in one way or another. Syntactic compounds, however, only allow a limited form of paraphrasing. (26) below is impossible, while (27) is a working sentence (Himeno 2001).

(26) *Taroo ga nai-te dashi-ta
Taroo NOM cry-GER take.out-PST
(intended as) 'start crying'

(27) Taroo ga nak-i-dashi-tara, Hanako mo soo shi-dashi-ta.
Taroo NOM cry-INF-take.out-CON, Hanako too so do-INF-take.out-PST
'When Hanako started crying, so did Taroo.'

This paraphrase using *suru*, 'do', as a proverb is impossible with lexical compounds. Consider (28). (Himeno 2001)

(28) *Taroo ga nomi-aruk-u to, Hanako mo soo shi-aruk-u
Taroo NOM drink-walk-NPAST CON, Hanako too so do-walk-NPAST
daroo.
MOD
(intended as) 'I guess that when Taroo goes bar hopping, Hanako goes too.'

While this does not exclude all lexical compounds as some of them will not easily be paraphrased in this way (*nomiaruku* would not translate straight into 'drink and walk'), it is an absolute that syntactic compounds can never be paraphrased in this manner. The below examples illustrates the difference between two superficially aspectual compounds.

(29) a. ame ga fur-i-yan-da
rain NOM fall-INF-stop-PST
'It stopped raining.'

b. ame ga fut-te yan-da
rain NOM fall-GER stop-PST
'It rained and then stopped.'

(30) a. ame ga fur-i-hajime-ta
rain NOM fall-INF-begin-PST
'It started raining'

b. *ame ga fut-te hajime-ta
rain NOM fall-GER begin-PST

Alas, while it is interesting and important to note the differences in paraphrasing, if we are to identify the differences between lexical and syntactic compounds we must look further afield.

3.2 Tertiary compounding

With at least some, if not all, of the syntactic verbs that Kageyama sorts under the heading of Group B verbs tertiary compounding is possible, suggesting that the morphemes of *dasu* among others enjoy more freedom than previously thought. Let us revisit an example from the introduction.

(31) Hanako ga nak-i-sakeb-i-dashi-tara, tomara-na-katta
Hanako NOM cry--INF-scream-INF-start-CON stop-NEG-PST
'Once Hanako started crying and screaming there was no stopping.'

Dasu seems to be added as the sentence is articulated as to indicate the start of the action.

Indeed, it plays no other part in the resulting sentence, but changes the semantics of the utterance profoundly, indicating the start of the action described by the main verb.

All verbal components occupying the second position in a syntactic compound (e.g. the *-hajimeru* in *tabehajimeru*) seem to be able to participate in tertiary compounding with a lexicalised compound verb as the base verb. On the other hand, tertiary compounding is impossible if we try affixing lexical items to either lexical or syntactic verbs.

(32) *Haha ga nak-i-sakeb-i-yan-da
Mother NOM cry-INF-scream-INF-stop-PST
(intended as) 'The mother stopped crying and screaming.'

(33) *Chichi ga nak-i-dash-i-sakeb-u
Father NOM cry-INF-take.out-INF-scream-NPAST
(intended as) 'The father started crying and screaming.'

It is also suspect whether a syntactic compound would allow the addition of a further syntactic element (or, as we might choose to see it, whether a verbal suffix of this kind allows a further suffix to modify the verb). If tertiary compounding is possible, this would suggest that the compound being modified is a lexical compound, while the tertiary compound element is a grammaticalised or near-grammaticalised suffix. In the below example, the compound verbs are not lexicalised and thus resist further compounding.

(34) ?? Hanako ga nak-i-dash-i-kake-ta
Hanako NOM cry-INF-take.out-INF-set-PST
(intended as) 'Hanako was on the verge of starting to cry'

This might also be due to hierarchical constraints in the suffixation of verbs. The place normally occupied by these morphemes is in the above example already taken up by *-dasu* when we try to further suffix *-kakeru*. (For a further discussion of the semantics of these various suffixes, see chapter 4 Semantic constraints.)

The existence of tertiary compounds can be taken as an indication that these verbal components are more akin to suffixes than to actual compounded elements. This is in line with Shibatani (1990), but I would state more strongly that these elements represent a class of

morphemes on their own.

3.3 Honorific sandwiching operation

In this section we will see that the components of at least some syntactic compounds can be separated by honorific forms (in Japanese referred to as *keigo*) in what Kageyama (1982) terms a “sandwiching operation” (Kageyama 1982:251). Most compound words behave similarly to non-compounded words when integrated into expressions like honorific language, and this applies to lexically formed compound verbs as well. But the often aspectual or adverbial syntactic compounds (or, more specifically their productive components) seem to behave differently from at least lexically formed compounds. Consider the following honorific forms in (35) and (36), representing the most common honorific usage, (35) with a normal verb and (36) with a lexical compound verb.

(35) sensei ga o-nak-i ni nar-u⁷
teacher NOM HON-cry-INF to become-NPAST
(honorific) 'The teacher cries.'

(36) sensei ga o-nak-i-sakeb-i ni nar-u
teacher NOM HON-cry-INF-scream-INF to become-NPAST
(honorific) 'The teacher cries and screams.'

Below is given another example, this time of a syntactic compound. While there are other patterns of which some differ slightly in meaning, (37) below is fully grammatical and represents a common pattern of usage.

(37) sensei ga o-tabe ni nar-i-hajimer-u
teacher NOM HON-eat-INF to become-INF-begin-NPAST
(honorific) 'The teacher starts to eat.'

This suggests that these are not as strongly compounded as lexical compounds. On the other hand, (38) is wholly ungrammatical.

⁷ The pattern of *o-naki-ni-naru* is theoretically repeatable for any Japanese verb and indicates the speaker's deference to the grammatical subject of the verb, in the examples a teacher. It is formed from the infinitive of the base verb, e.g. *naki* for 'cry' and *tabe* for 'eat'.

(38) *sensei ga o-nak-i ni nar-i-sakeb-u
teacher NOM HON-cry-INF to become-INF-scream-NPAST
(intended as) (honorific) 'The teacher cries and screams.'

If we were to try with a few more verbs, we would soon find out that lexical compounds are impossible to separate, while at least syntactic ones seem to be 'sandwichable'. This points to a fundamental difference between the two. Consider (39).

(39) o-nak-i ni nar-i-das-u
HON-cry-INF to become-INF-take.out-NPAST
(honorific) 'to start crying'

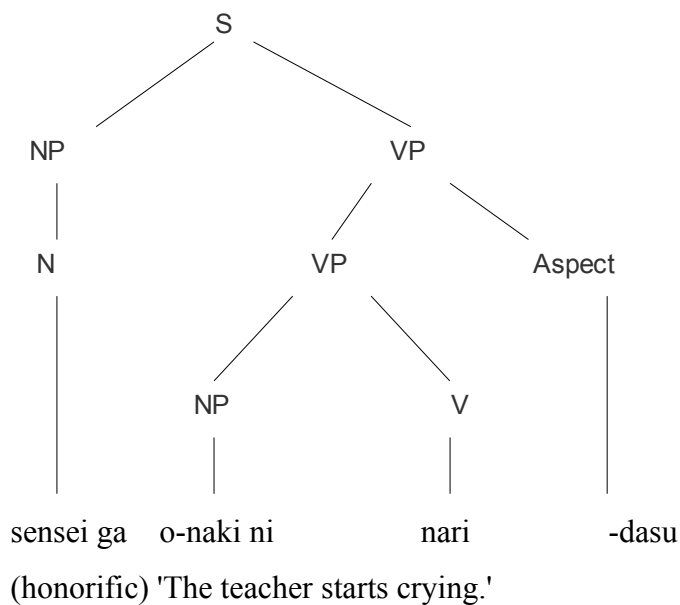
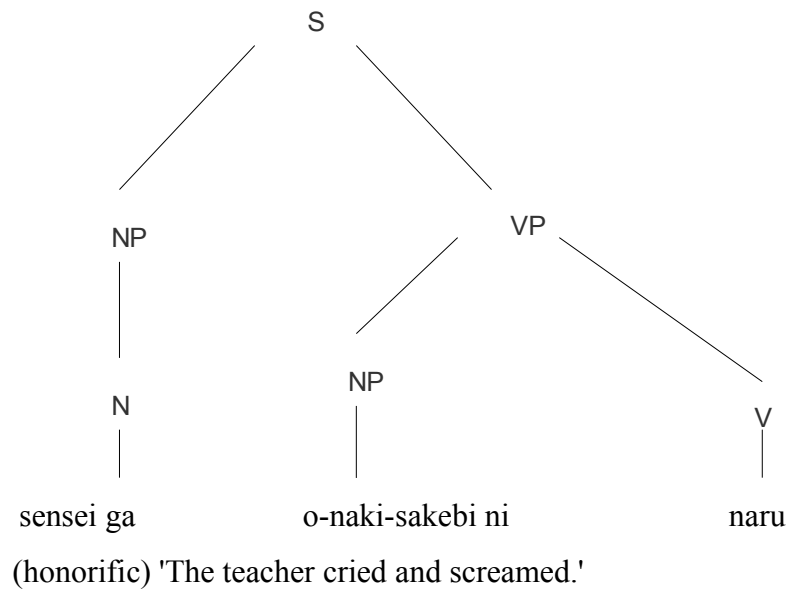
In the example above, the syntactic compound *naki-dasu* sandwiches the honorific between its two elements, namely the infinitive form of *naku* and the aspectual suffix *-dasu*. If we try using a lexical compound verb as the 'base verb', we might get the following.

(40) o-naki-sakebi ni nari-das-u
HON-cry-scream to become-take.out-NPAST
(honorific) 'to start crying and screaming'

The above examples are still grammatical despite the sandwiching operation. This is however not true for the components of lexical compound verbs. The below sentence in (41) is ungrammatical.

(41) *Sensei ga naki ni nari-sakebi-mashita.
Teacher NOM cry to become-scream-POL.PST
(intended as) 'The teacher cried and screamed.'

If we were to attempt to draw phrase structure trees for these various expressions, we can with the help of Kuno's (1987) findings deduce for ourselves the following structures. The first is for the standard honorific form with the lexical compound verb *naki-sakebu*, the second is for the syntactic compound verb *naki-dasu*. (Kuno 1987)



As seen above, the structure of the latter sentence differs considerably from the structure of the first sentence. *Dasu* positions itself in an entirely different place in the structure as opposed to the components of the lexical V - V compound. Until this structure is disputed, this is another piece

of circumstantial evidence pointing toward the verbal components of syntactic compounds being not compounded verbs (at least not in the sense that lexical compounds are) and more a combination of a base verb and a productive morpheme, thus abiding by a different set of rules.

4 Semantic constraints

With many of the productive compound elements we seem to see a fair deal of syntactic constraints as to how they can be combined, most prominently in the case of tertiary compounding.

Not all verbs allow tertiary compounding in all cases, but this might be a function of semantics operating in the deep structure and should be considered in connection with the fact that certain non-compounded verbs may not be compounded with aspectual elements. Verbs like *naki-sakebi-dasu* and *naguri-koroshi-kakeru* seem to be possible, while *omoidashi-dasu* is at least suspect if not outright unacceptable. Why is this? Compare (42a) and (42b).

- (42) a. ?? kookoo no jidai o omo-i-dash-i-dashi-tara, hanashi ga
 high school GEN age ACC reminisce-INF-take.out-INF-CON talk NOM
 tomara-na-katta
 stop-NEG-PST
- b. kookoo no jidai o omo-i-dash-i-hajime-tara, hanashi ga
 high school GEN age ACC reminisce-INF-begin-INF-CON talk NOM
 tomara-na-katta
 stop-NEG-PST
- 'When we started reminiscing about our high school years, we just could not stop talking.'

It seems that while both seem possible, native speaker intuition reacts strongly against the grammaticality of (42a) because of the presence of *dasu*. *Dasu* is also homophonous with (but not semantically identical to) the latter part of *omoidasu*, prompting the question if not phonological constraints might be operating. We must also consider the possibility that semantics are at work. The semantics of *omoidasu* also seem to not allow modification by the aspectual *dasu* component. *Dasu* is a punctual verb which describes an instantaneous and often non-volitional action, while *hajimeru* simply indicates the start of an action, and *omoidasu* is most often not an instantaneous action and hence may not be modified by *dasu* (cf. Soga 1983:130).

Omoidasu could (and indeed probably should) be considered a proper lexicalised item separate from compound verbs, and thus it is not a case of tertiary compounding at all. Instead it is an example of some constraints being in place among these suffixes. Further consider the below example, (43) and (44).

(43) ??Hajimari-kaker-u
begin-be.about-NPAST
'be about to begin'

(44) ?? jyugyoo ga hajimari-kake-ta tokoro da
lesson NOM begin-be.about-PST place COP
'The lesson is about to begin.'

The semantics of the verb being modified seem to be important in deciding which elements may be added and which may not. Thus the notion of being 'about to begin', while sound in English, is as a compound verb suspect in Japanese due to semantic overlapping resulting from combining *hajimaru* and *kakeru*.

Some of tendencies of usage are not strictly limited to the level of lexical semantics. There seems to exist a tendency to put express the aspectual meaning of *-kakeru* with the evidential modal expression *-soo da*, as in (45).

(45) jyugyoo ga hajimari-soo-na tokoro da
lesson NOM begin-MOD-REL place COP
'The lesson seems about to begin.'

Examples such as (45) already execute the intended role of the aspectual *-kakeru* and thus limit *-kakeru* somewhat when it comes to potential usage. This seems to have to do with degrees of conventionality at work in how set expressions are utilised by speakers, rather than being an indication of any grammatical absolutes.

More research into the semantic constraints of these elements will lead to a better understanding of these affixes place in the syntactic and word formation systems of Japanese. The tests given earlier in this paper may prove effective in guiding researchers and teachers towards more comprehensive paradigm for Japanese compound verbs. A more comprehensive outline in regards to aspect and tense is also given Soga (1983).

5 Conclusions

One of the fundamental issues in linguistic research is the problem of observing a complex, evolving system shared across multitudes of speakers who while displaying some idiosyncrasies will have a surprisingly mutual system of expression. This applies both to observing both individual languages (like in this case, Japanese) and language at large. By pinning down certain classes of words and morphemes we see our work as done, but the actual use of the very words researched might differ from the recorded system. I feel that the case of compound verbs is an example of this. While the definitions and the system is sound when looked at in isolation, the phenomenon of tertiary compounding is largely ignored and semantics are afforded in most cases only some cursory observation, while the word formation perspective is dominant. Questions are asked as to where these words come from, rather than how they are used. The hypothesis of two classes of compounded verbs is made immensely more complex by the inclusion of the existence of these tertiary compounds if the current explanation is to hold true. The other possible course of action is to rethink the system, or at least expand it.

Shibatani (1990) seems to be the only author who mentions the possibility of these verbal components undergoing a process towards becoming verbal suffixes. He does this as a comment on the seeming lack of connection between the transitivity of the component and the resulting compound, but I believe that it can be demonstrated through the tests given in this paper that these morphemes are not only going through a process of grammaticalisation, but that the process in question is far along toward completion (if such can be posited in the ever changing system which language constitutes).

For the reasons stated previously, I wish to propose looking at the verb components *dasu*, *kakeru* and *hajimeru*, among others, to be not compounded elements, but productive morphemes.

From a word formation perspective, these elements may look like 'true compounds', but if looked at from a more functional perspective they seem to behave in the manner of free, productive morphemes. As follows from such an analysis, there might be room for a further class of morphemes, as there indeed already seems to be in the practical teaching of Japanese.

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