THE MORPHOSYNTACTIC STRUCTURE AND LOGICAL STRUCTURES OF
COMPOUND VERBS IN JAPANESE

by

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the morphosyntactic structure of compound verbs in Japanese. Compound verbs constitute morphologically a unitary class of V-V, in which a finite V2 is bound to a non-finite V1 as in suberi-otiru slip(V1)-fall(V2) ‘slip down’. Recent studies (Kageyama 1989, 1993; Matsumoto 1992, 1996) argue that Japanese compound verbs consist of multiple types structurally on the basis of their distinct behaviors when a compound verb co-occurs with another element (e.g., the passive morpheme -(r)are) within the same clause. This study corroborates Kageyama and Matsumoto in that Japanese V-Vs enter into multiple structural types but offers an alternative account working within the framework of Role and Reference Grammar (RRG), arguing that the notions of nexus and juncture can make explicit the structural relations between the component verbs. It claims that the morphosyntactic and the semantic relations exhibited by the Japanese V-V construction are systematic, conforming to the principle of the Interclausal Relations Hierarchy (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997), which explicates the iconic relationship between the syntactic tightness and the semantic cohesion among the units. Specifically, of the semantic relations which V-V expresses, the concepts of causative, phase, psych-action and jussive are instantiated by lexical compounding, nuclear cosubordination, core cosubordination, and core coordination respectively, whose morphosyntactic tightness is organized from the tightest to the loosest as predicted by the principle of the Interclausal Relations Hierarchy. Chapter 1 is the introduction. Chapter 2 introduces the framework. It also develops the diagnostics tests to examine the Japanese Aktionsart classes. Chapter 3 focuses on the transitivity structure based on Jacobsen’s (1992) observation of ‘transitivity parity’. Chapter 4 lays
out the criteria to distinguish syntactic from lexical phenomena in RRG terms. Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 examine the juncture-nexus types as well as the logical structures of non-phase verbs (e.g., -sugi ‘excessively’) and phase verbs (e.g., -hazime ‘begin’) respectively. Chapter 7 presents an analysis of lexical compound verbs (e.g., -aw ‘fit/match (distributively)’), which have been previously analyzed as syntactic. Chapter 8 presents a summary and examines the implications of this study.
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## ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>Accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARG</td>
<td>Argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASP</td>
<td>Aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAUS</td>
<td>Causative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CL(F)</td>
<td>Classifier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM</td>
<td>Comitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>Copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>Dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCA</td>
<td>Direct core argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DfP</td>
<td>Different pivot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVID</td>
<td>Evidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOC</td>
<td>Focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>Genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Honorific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF</td>
<td>Illocutionary Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRAN</td>
<td>Intransitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LINK</td>
<td>Linker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS</td>
<td>Logical structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSC</td>
<td>Layered structure of the clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPST</td>
<td>Non-past</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note:

1. When a hyphenation ‘-’ is placed immediately before a verb, it indicates that the verb is V2 (e.g., -hazime ‘begin’). Otherwise, the hyphenation is placed after the verb (e.g., tabe- ‘eat’).

2. The system of romanization employed is the *kunree-siki* system except for the cited work and authors’ names which employ the *Hepburn* system.