



The Construction and Meaning of Compound Nouns in The Short Story “Remon” by Kajii Motojiro

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Abstract. The most common types of words in Japanese sentence formation are noun vocabulary. Noun compound words are formed by combining two or more words to produce a word in the noun category. The combination of words in compound nouns comprises words with diverse origins and categories when viewed from their construction; and can produce meaning based on its constituent elements or not. This study aims to investigate the structure and meaning of noun compound words in Japanese using qualitative descriptive methods. The data was taken from the short story “*Remon*” by Kajii Motojiro, which was taken from the book “*Kimi ni Todoketai 1: Kumpulan Puisi, Prosa dan Drama Pilihan Jepang*” by Purnomo (2014). Data collection was performed using listening methods and note-taking techniques. Then, data analysis is performed by applying collection methods and techniques for direct elements. The results of the analysis are presented using informal methods. The results of this research will clearly describe the elements and meanings produced by combining elements in the formation of noun compound words. This research is expected to prove beneficial for Japanese language learners in comprehending the significance and correlation between elements in the construction of compound nouns.

Keywords: Derivative, Japanese Compound Nouns, Structure, Meaning

1 Introduction

Short stories are one of the most important literary works because they can portray the life of a society at a certain time, describing the reality, culture and traditions, social structure, and character of a nation. The character of a nation can be known by reading the literary works of that nation. However, not all literary works are accessible to users of a different language, and this is where translation plays an important role. One of the difficulties in translating languages with different structures is translation at the word level, especially compound words that not only have non-idiomatic, semi-idiomatic meanings but also idiomatic meanings.

Compound words (*fukugougo*) are words that are not single and consist of several elements that constitute a whole. This is reinforced by Sutedi, who explains that compound words are words formed from the combination of several content morphemes [1]. Akimoto divides compound words into five types: *fukugou meishi* (noun compound words), *fukugou doushi* (verb compound words), *fukugou*

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keiyoudoushi (i-adjective compound words), *fukugou keiyoudoushi* (na-adjective compound words), and *fukugou fukushi* (adverbial compound words) [2]. This research will focus on noun compound words.

The meaning resulting from the combination of several elements is related to the basic meaning of the constituent elements and can even produce new meanings that have nothing to do with the basic meaning of the constituent elements. Kridalaksana divides meaning into three types, namely idiom meaning, semi-idiom meaning, and non-idiom meaning [3].

The elements that make up the compound word also have a relationship between the elements. Akimoto divides the relationship between noun compound elements into five forms, namely N + N, N + V, V + V, V + N, and A + N [2]. Nomura divides the relationship between noun compound elements into three types, namely complement relationship (*hosoku kankei*), modification relationship, and contradiction relationship (*tairitsu kankei*) [4].

The previous research that is relevant to this study is a study entitled “The Process of Japanese Noun Compound Word Formation from Kanji 米 (*kome, bei, mai*)” [5]. The research aims to find out the formation process and meaning of Japanese noun compound words derived from kanji 米 (*kome, bei, mai*). The research and this research both discuss the structure and meaning of noun compound words. The difference is that besides discussing the structure and meaning of noun compound words, this research also discusses the relationship between the elements that form noun compound words.

Based on this background, this research aims to identify the structure, meaning, and relationship between the elements of noun compound words found in the short story “*Remon*”.

2 Methods

This research is qualitative descriptive research. The method used in data collection is the listening method with the basic tapping technique and continued with the note-taking technique. First, the writer read the short story “*Remon*” contained in the book *Kimi ni Todoketai 1: Kumpulan Puisi, Prosa, dan Drama Pilihan Jepang* by Purnomo. Then, the writer recorded the noun compound words on the data card and classified the structure, meaning, and relationship between the elements. Data analysis was conducted using the agih method with the direct element division technique (BUL). The agih method is a data analysis whose determining tool comes from the language concerned [6]. In this research, the determining tool used is noun compound words,

which, with the direct element division technique (BUL), will be divided based on their forming elements to find out their structure and meaning. The results of the data analysis are presented using the informal descriptive method. The informal descriptive method is the presentation of the results of data analysis with ordinary words [6].

3 Result and Discussion

Table 1. Compound Word Structure Data.

No.	Structure	Data
1.	N + N	74
2.	V + N	26
3.	N + V	19
4.	A + N	12
5.	NA + N	2
6.	V + V	25
7.	A + V	2
8.	ADV + N	1
9.	N + A	3
10.	NA + A	1
11.	A + NA	1
12.	A + A	2
13.	V + NA	1
14.	NA + NA	1
	Total	170

3.1 N + N

- (1) 贅沢 = 贅 + 沢
Zeitaku = *zei* + *taku*
 Luxury = luxury + grace [7].

The compound noun 贅沢 (*zeitaku*) is formed from the noun 贅 (*zei*) and the noun 沢 (*taku*). The noun compound belongs to the *kango* vocabulary type because both elements are read *onyomi*. The compound word 贅沢 (*zeitaku*) means "luxury". Lexically, the noun 贅 (*zei*) means "luxury" and the noun 沢 (*taku*) means "grace". So the resulting meaning is a non-idiomatic meaning because it is in accordance with the basic meaning of the elements that form it. The elements contained in the noun compound 贅沢 (*zeitaku*) have a synonymous relationship. This is because the noun 贅 (*zei*) has the same meaning as the noun 沢 (*taku*).

3.2 A + N

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| (2) 熱心 | = 熱 + 心 |
| <i>Nesshin</i> | = <i>ness</i> + <i>shin</i> |
| Excited | = hot + excited [7]. |

The compound noun 熱心 (*nesshin*) is formed from the adjective 熱 (*ness*) and the noun 心 (*shin*). The compound noun belongs to the *kango* vocabulary type because both elements are read *onyomi*. The compound word 熱心 (*nesshin*) means "excited". Lexically, the adjectival element 熱 (*ness*) means "hot" and the noun element 心 (*shin*) means "vigor." The resulting meaning is a semi-idiom. This is because one of the compound elements, 熱 (*ness*) does not match its lexical meaning; 熱 (*ness*) does not mean "heat" in general but means "spirit." The elements contained in the compound noun 熱心 (*nesshin*) have the relationship of being *kango*.

3.3 A + V

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| (3) 辛抱 | = 辛 + 抱 |
| <i>Shinbou</i> | = <i>shin</i> + <i>hou</i> |
| Patience | = bitter + embrace [7]. |

The compound noun 辛抱 (*shinbou*) is formed from the adjective element 辛 (*shin*) and the verb element 抱 (*hou*). The verb element 抱 (*hou*) is allomorphized to read 抱 (*bou*). The noun compound is a type of *kango* vocabulary because both elements are read *onyomi*. The compound word 辛抱 (*shinbou*) means "patience". Lexically, the adjectival element 辛 (*shin*) means "bitter" and the verb element 抱 (*hou*) means "to embrace" The resulting meaning is an idiom. This is because the compound noun 辛抱 (*shinbou*) does not match the lexical meaning of each of its constituent elements. Thus, the intended meaning is not "embracing bitterness" but "patience." The elements in the noun compound 辛抱 (*shinbou*) have a modification 1 relationship where the adjective 辛 (*shin*) modifies the verb 抱 (*hou*).

3.4 ADV + N

(4) 最後	= 最 + 後
<i>Saigo</i>	= <i>sai</i> + <i>go</i>
Last	= most + last [7].

The noun compound word 最後 (*saigo*) is formed from the adverbial element 最 (*sai*) and the noun element 後 (*go*). The noun compound is a type of *kango* vocabulary because both elements are read *onyomi*. The compound word 最後 (*saigo*) means "last". Lexically, the adverbial element 最 (*sai*) means "most" and the noun element 後 (*go*) means "last". So the resulting meaning is a non-idiomatic meaning because it is in accordance with the basic meaning of the elements that form it. The elements contained in the noun compound 最後 (*saigo*) are complementary relationships. This is because the adverbial element 最 (*sai*) complements the noun element 後 (*go*), which forms the meaning of "last".

4 Conclusion

In the short story "Remon", 170 data of noun compound words were found. The N + N structure is the structure with the most number of data found, which is 74 data. In the process of combining noun compound words, there are two data that have changed the sound or allomorph of one of the elements, such as the letter h to b and the letter h to p.

The meaning resulting from the process of combining several elements is in the form of meaning related to the basic meaning of each of the forming elements (non-idiom meaning), meaning that is not in accordance with the basic meaning of one of the forming elements (semi-idiom meaning), and meaning that is not in accordance with the basic meaning of each of the forming elements (idiom meaning). Non-idiom meaning is the most common data found, namely 100 data. The most common relationship between elements is the complementary relationship, which is 42 data.

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