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The structure of provisional words

The Structure of Provisional Words

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Abstract

In the course of our linguistic lives, besides "words" in the usual sense, there also arise words that are temporary and impromptu. Such words are particularly often found in newspaper articles. I will term these words "provisional words" and consider the process by which such combinations are formed and the relation between provisional words and *bunsetsu*, a basic syntactic unit in Japanese grammar.

I. Long Words

As a matter of general knowledge, we think of words in Japanese as being something like the entries in a dictionary. Most such words can be written with a couple of *kanji*, and certainly none of them are particularly long. This is the pattern that is conceptually registered in our minds as expressing the concept of a word. However, if one looks at lexical expressions using actual linguistic data, one notices that there are a great many much, much longer words. The newspaper is the best source of material to bring such words to our notice.

When the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL) did a vocabulary survey, the first question they ran into was the question of, "What is a word?" The things left after breaking sentences up into *bunsetsu* and eliminating particles and auxiliary verbs were frequently not words like those found as entries in Japanese dictionaries but rather strings of *kanji* like *Tōdoku Nihon yūkō giin renmei kaichō* [East.Germany Japan friendship member.of.the.Diet league chairman] 'Chairman of the Diet East Germany-Japan Friendship League' or *Sangiin zenkokukusei kaikaku sōan* [House.of.Councilors national.constituency.system reform draft,proposal] 'Draft Proposal for House of Councilors National Constituency System Reform'. At NINJAL, this kind of long word was termed an "α-unit" or a "long unit word", and short words like those that appear as entries in Japanese dictionaries were termed "β-units" or "short unit words" to distinguish between them. If short words are the kind of words that appear as entries in a Japanese dictionary, long words can be said to be the kind of word that might be found in a dictionary of neologisms or a social science dictionary. In contrast to the former group, which will continue to exist for a long time within the linguistic system of Japanese, the latter are words that arise in response to the needs of the moment and quickly disappear. We can, thus, call this latter group "provisional words".

II.   Why do provisional words arise?

The circumstances under which provisional words are generated can be divided into cases in which a word spontaneously appears in the real world and cases in which someone creates a word in the process of creating some written work. Let us trace the process below.

A. Provisional words that arise in real-life scenes

1. Proper Nouns

Place names are used on a daily basis, and so we do not often see very long place names, but one can make personal names that are quite long. Although something like *Jugemu*[i] is out of the question, the names of the gods of our ancestors that appear in the *Kojiki* are quite unrestrainedly long. "*Amenigishi kuninigishi amatsuhitakahiko hononinigi no mikoto*" or "*Amatsuhitakahiko nagisatake ugaya fukiahezu no mikoto*" are names that surely no one can pronounce in one breath. Personal names contain various informative content such as words of praise or prayer or descriptions of the person's origins and thus can possibly grow indefinitely long.

An occupational title like *Monbushō Shotōchūtōkyōikukyoku Gakkō Kyōiku Kachō* [Ministry.of.Education Primary.and.lower.secondary.education.bureau School Education Section.chief] is not a pure proper noun, but it is also not a common noun. Also, it is inescapably fated to become structurally long.

When a natural disaster like the Ise Bay Typhoon in the past or this year's torrential rain in Nagasaki arises, NHK and the newspaper companies set up and begin operating *~hisaisha kyūen taisaku honbu* [~victim relief measures headquarters].

If we think of the names of things like this as being proper names in a broad sense, proper names are always a productive source for new, long names.

2. Words used in isolation

For example, in the Ōtemachi station on the Tōzai subway line there are a large number of exits and to indicate the exit in the direction of the Marunouchi area, one finds *Chikatetsu Tōzai-sen Ōtemachi-eki Marunouchi-hōmen deguchi* [subway Tōzai-line Ōtemachi-station Marunouchi-direction exit]. When this location is indicated on a map, this is how it is designated. This kind of noun string is not much found in speech or in literary works like novels, but they tend to turn up in places like information boards. A person writing this is probably not conscious of the whole string forming a single word, but, through gathering the five nouns *chikatetsu* 'subway', *Tōzai-sen* 'Tōzai line', *Ōtemachi-eki* 'Ōtemachi station', *Marunouchi-hōmen* 'Marunouchi direction', and *deguchi* 'exit' in a single location, it ends up appearing to the eye of someone reading it to be a long provisional word. In a way it is similar to small patches of foam floating on the water gathering together in one place and eventually becoming one large patch.

B. Provisional words that arise due to their particular location in a written work

Next, there is the case when, in the process of creating some written work, a writer takes advantage of the visual environment and, since it is written rather than spoken language, using the space of the page, ends up somewhat arbitrarily creating a single word clump.

1. In newspaper headlines

Newspaper headlines, with their own particular grammar, have come to take a number of fixed patterns, and among such patterns there is "nominalization". When the formation of a noun phrase through the use of noun-ending structures goes a step further, one ends up creating a noun phrase devoid of grammatical particles. Consider the following headline (*Mainichi* March 12).

> *Hōkatsuteki   kakujikken   kinshi   jōyaku zukuri*
> comprehensive   nuclear.test   ban   treaty   formation
>
> *Bei"sanka   no   yōi"   to   hyōmei*
> US "participate   GEN prepared" QUOTE express
>
> *Kokuren   gunshukui*
> UN   disarmament.committee
> 'According to UN disarmament committee, US expresses willingness to participate in the creation of a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty'

The accompanying article contains the line:

> *Kore made   Beikoku   wa, Nihon nado   ga*
> this   until   US   TOP Japan   etcetera NOM
> *tsuyoku shuchō   shite   ita   hōkatsuteki   kakujikken*
> strongly advocate   do.GER be.PST comprehensive   nuclear.test
> *kinshi <u>no</u> jōyaku zukuri   niwa …*
> ban   GEN treaty   formation towards.TOP
> *tono   taido   wo   tori …*
> QUOTE.GEN attitude ACC taking
> 'Up to this point the US has taken the attitude of … towards the creation of a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty, which Japan and others have strongly advocated, and …'

Here, the case particle *no* [GEN] blocks the formation of a long noun, but *no* did not appear in the headline.

In the same newspaper on the same day, the following headline is also found.

4-sai   bōya otegara   tsūhō
four-year.old   boy   praiseworthy report
'Four-year old makes praiseworthy report (to police)'

Although *otegara tsūhō* is not a long noun, it is clearly formed by some sort of ad hoc linking. The following is a headline appearing in the May 11 *Asahi Shinbun*.

Wanman   jinin   no   hatarakimono
single.hand self.acknowledgment GEN hard.worker

chōsa   ni   miru chūshōkigyō   keieisha   zō
survey   LOC see   mid.small.business proprietor image
'The image of the mid- to small-business proprietor that emerges in the survey: a self-image as a single-handing hard worker'

The phrase *wanman jinin no* is based on the normal phrasing *wanman wo jinin suru* [single.hand ACC self.acknowledge do.NPST] which has been nominalized to *wanman.jinin* and then turned into a nominal-modifier by the addition of *no* [GEN].

2. Using the visuality of the print medium

As in *sakunen shichi-kugatsuki no jisshitsu seichō wa* [last.year seven—nine.month.period GEN real.growth TOP] 'as for the real growth over the period July-September' or *Gojūnen ichi-sangatsuki irai rokunen-buri no mainasu seichō* [fifty.year one—three.month.period since six.year.gap GEN minus growth] 'the first negative growth in six years over the year 50 January-March period' (February 24, *Yomiuri*), the use of a hyphen or dash, which has no pronunciation, is something that is possible because it is in a print medium that one takes in with one's eyes. Even if one were to read these aloud, probably they would be read as provisional words like *shichi.kugatsuki* or *ichi.sangatsuki*, something that is possible because such a form has once been formed as a visual perception. If one were to use only spoken forms, they would probably be expressed in a form like *shichigatsu kara kugatsu made no kessanki* [July from September until GEN accounting.period] 'the accounting period from July through September' or *daini shihanki* [number.two quarter] 'the second quarter'.

The following example relies heavily on the use of quotation marks.

Kono ofutari, "moderu A fōdo kurabu" no   kaiin   de,   dōkurabu

this	couple	model	A Ford	club	GEN	member	COP.GER	aforementioned.club

hatsuan no   "moderu A   ni   notte   sekai   isshū"   doraibu   ni
idea   GEN   model A   DAT get.on.GER   world   one.round drive   DAT

chōsen-suru   koto   ni   natta
 challenge-do.NPST NMLZ   DAT become.PST

'This couple are members of the "Model A Ford Club" and ended up taking on the challenge of the club's <u>"around the world riding in a Model A Ford" excursion</u>.'

<div align="right">(Asahi Newspaper 3.26)</div>

This kind of written expression using quotes *"moderu A ni notte sekai isshū" doraibu* '"around the world riding in a Model A Ford"' appeals to the visual sense in a way that cannot be expressed as a spoken expression.

C. Provisional words that arise within a sentence

Production of written works consists of assembling what are called "sentences" in grammar. In such sentences, provisional words appear regularly.

1. Previously created, pre-existing provisional words appearing in sentences

If a long word already exists before a sentence is uttered, naturally it can appear in the sentence. Because newspapers report the facts in the world around us, long words such as the names of committees or of incidents or things occur quite easily. What I would especially like to consider in this article is not this kind of word but provisional words that occur for the first time in the utterance context. These are described in the next section.

2. Provisional words created through compositional techniques

In the busy expressive context of newspaper articles, expressions that end up consisting of a number of elements grouped into a single unit often appear, not only in headlines, but also in the body of articles.

Rēgan   Seiken   no   seisaku   wo   megutte,   Chūgoku-naibu   demo,
Reagan   Administration GEN   policy   ACC concern.GER China-internal.part even

taiBei,   taiSo   seisaku no   konponteki
towards.America towards.Soviet.Union policy   GEN fundamental

<u>*minaoshi   kiun*</u>   *ga   takamatte iru.*

re-evaluation   momentum   NOM   rise.GER   be.NPST

'Regarding the policies of the Reagan administration, even within the inner sanctums of China, <u>momentum for fundamentally re-evaluating policies toward America and towards the Soviet Union</u> is rising.'

<div align="right">(Asahi Newspaper 3.26)</div>

If the underlined portion were to be restated fully spelled out, it would come out as *taiBei seisaku to taiSo seisaku to wo konponteki ni minaosō to suru kiun* 'momentum for attempting to fundamentally re-evaluate policies toward America and policies toward the Soviet Union'.

Below we will limit our discussion to this kind of provisional word occurring in a sentential context. Most of the data are taken from the February and March 1982 morning editions of the Asahi, Mainichi, and Yomiuri newspapers.

III. Grammar forming provisional words

Provisional words appearing in newspaper articles are nearly all clusters of nouns, and the noun clusters can be either tight or loose.

A. Tight cluster provisional nouns

1. Those due to suffix-like word-forming elements

There are many suffix-like elements in Sino-Japanese words, but even ordinary words can become ad hoc suffixes and function to make words longer.

Warushawa   no   machi   wa,   kaigenreishikōtōji   ni   kurabe,
Warsaw   GEN city   TOP   martial.law.declaration.be.in.effect.time DAT comparing

heishi   no   sugata   mo   gutto   heri ….
soldier   GEN appearance   also   greatly   decreasing

'Compared to the time when the declaration of martial law was in effect, the sight of soldiers has greatly decreased, and …'

<div align="right">(Yomiuri 2/24)</div>

Kaigenreishikōnikagetsuyo   wo
martial.law.declaration.be.in.effect.two.months.over   ACC

keika-shita   Pōrando no   hyōjō   wa ….
pass-do.PST   Poland   GEN expression TOP

'The expressions in Poland, where a declaration of martial law had been in effect for over two months, …'

<div align="center">6</div>

"Yakeishi   ni mizu"   teido   no   kōka   nara,   motto   betsu no
"hot.rock   on water"   degree   GEN   effect   COP.PROV   more   other GEN

riyōsaku ga   aru   no   dewanaika ….
use.method NOM   exist.NPST   NMLZ   TAG.QUESTION
'If the effectiveness going to be as useless as pouring water on a hot rock, isn't there some other plan to use it?'

Examples like the second one, if considered closely, stretch the boundaries of grammar, and, going together with *keika* 'pass', it should be *kaigenrei no shikō kara nikagetsuyo wo keika-sita* [martial.law.declaration GEN put.into.effect since two.months.over ACC passed] 'over two months have passed since the promulgation of the declaration of martial law'.

Yudaya-shijōshugi no   kagekiha
Jewish-supremacism   GEN radical.wing
'the radical wing of the Jewish supremacists'

Tsuyoi   kuchō   de   "Arabufushinron"   wo kurikaesi
strong   tone.of.voice   with "Arab.distrust.theory" ACC repeating
'repeating his "distrust of Arabs argument" in a strong tone of voice'

Since words like *shijōshugi* 'supremacism' and *fushinron* 'suspicion, distrust' require some target word representing who or what is 'supreme' or is 'distrusted', they end up functioning in a suffix-like way.

Chiji   no   kōyaku   de   "maitaun Tōkyō" kōsō
governor GEN verbal.promise   by "my.town Tokyo" vision

wo   susumete   iru   to   ga ….
ACC   advance.GER be.NPST to   municipality.of.Tokyo   NOM
'Tokyo, which is pressing forward on the "my town Tokyo" vision the governor promised, …'

Chiji   no   "tankikessen"   hōshin ga,   "ryūketsu
governor   GEN "short.battle"   policy NOM   "bloodshed

no jitai"   wo   maneku   kiken   ga   aru
GEN situation" ACC invite.NPST   danger   NOM   exist.NPST
'There a danger that the governor's "short battle" policy could invite a "bloodbath".'

"Maitaun Tōkyō" 'my town Tokyo' and *"tankikessen"* 'short battle' express the content of *kōsō* 'vision' and *hōshin* 'policy', respectively, and a word like *toiu* 'QUOTE' or *tono* 'QUOTE' could appear between them to tie them together. Words like *kōsō* and *hōshin*, together with *jijō* 'circumstances', *jōsei* 'situation', *mitōshi* 'outlook', and other words like them, have properties like the formal noun *koto*ii in that, rather than adding information, their primary function is to form a noun phrase chunk.

　　In the case of the *ippo temae* 'one step before' in the following example as well, since there must be something that this is 'one step before', the word ends up being a suffix. *Ippo* is Sino-Japanese and *temae* is native Japanese, but they function together as a suffix.

Kyōdōkaihatsu   to   itte   mo,   shōgyōka   ippo   temae no
joint.development   QUOTE   call.GER even   commercialization one.step   before GEN

jisshōro   no   kyōdōsekkei ni   todomaru   ga, ….
demonstration.furnace GEN joint.design   at   stop.NPST   but
'Although called joint development, it stops at the joint design of a demonstration furnace one step short of commercialization, but ….'

Among native Japanese words, the infinitive (*ren'yōkei*) form of a verb converts to a noun, carrying with it the words preceding it. In *akushitsu takushī ihan kakushi* [malign taxi violations concealment] (Yomiuri 2/24), *kakushi* 'concealment' encompasses *takushī ihan* 'taxi violations' and *akushitsu* 'malign' is prefixed to the whole thing, yielding 'malign concealment of taxi violations'. The *atsukai* 'treatment', *mōde* 'pilgrimage', and *banare* 'abandonment' found in *son'eki kanjō atsukai* [profit-loss.calculation.treatment] 'treatment as a profit-loss calculation' (Asahi 3/26), *Washinton mōde wa shinai toiu Dogōru shugi no dentō* [Washington.pilgrimage TOP not.do QUOTE De Gaulle ism GEN tradition] 'the DeGaulleist tradition of not making a pilgrimage to Washington' (Mainichi 3/12), and *Tomin no tobasubanare ni stoppu wo kakeru tame* [Tokyoite GEN city.bus.abandonment DAT stop ACC put sake] 'in order to put a stop to the Tokyoites ceasing to use city busses' (Mainichi 3/12) are nominalized forms from *to atsukau* 'treat as', *ni mōderu* 'make a pilgrimage to', and *wo hanareru* 'separate from', respectively. It seems odd to now call this phenomenon found with native verbs "provisional words" as there are words like *kuniumi*

'birth of the nation' and *kunibiki* 'drawing together of the nations'[iii], *miyakoutsuri* 'moving of the capital', *kuruwagayoi* 'frequenting of the pleasure quarters', and *dokyodameshi* 'testing one's courage' that have been used with a sense of familiarity from a very long time ago in the linguistic lives of the Japanese and which can be viewed as having lost none of the ability to form new words.

2. Those due to prefix-like word-forming elements

The following examples are both phrases from headlines.

Shibuya   ni   uruoiyūhodō
Shibuya   in   pleasant.walkway
'pleasant walkway in Shibuya'

<div align="right">(Yomiuri 2/24)</div>

"Shōbōkeikakusho"   to   ōchigai   no   osomatsutaisei
"firefighting.planning.document with   huge.difference GEN   pathetic.framework
'a pathetic framework vastly different from the firefighting planning document'

<div align="right">(Yomiuri 2/24)</div>

As *uruoiyūhodō* 'pleasant.walkway' is an actual walkway that has been so named, it is a provisional word that was created before the article appeared and *osomatsutaisei* 'pathetic.framework' is a written way of stating something theatrically and means the same as *osomatsu na taisei* 'pathetic ADN framework', just like saying *Gozonji hatamoto taikutsu otoko*[iv] [you.know direct.retainer.of.the.shogun boring.man].

There are many Sino-Japanese prefixes, but it should be noted that among them there are ones like the *tai-* in *taisen shōkaiki* 'anti-sub patrol.plane', which does not just function as a prefix to *sen* (=*sensuikan* 'submarine') but, as seen in the meaning *sensuikan wo aite ni shōkai suru hikōki* [submarine ACC adversary DAT patrol do airplane] 'an airplane that patrols taking submarines as adversaries', also covers *shōkai* 'patrol', and thus ultimately governs two elements.

Miriyōchi   mo   yaku 20,000,000   heihō   mētoru ni   tasshite   iru.
unused.land   also   about 20,000,000   square   meters   DAT reach.GER be.NPST
'The unused land also has reached about 20,000,000 square meters.'

<div align="right">(Asahi 3/26)</div>

Kojin   kashobun shotoku   ga   2-nen   renzoku   mainasu   ni   natta….
individual   disposable income   NOM   2-years in.a.row   minus   DAT become.PST
'Individual disposable income has fallen for two years in a row.'

<div align="right">(Mainichi 3/12)</div>

Mi 'not yet' links with *riyō* 'use' and then attaches *chi* 'land' [[*mi*+ *riyō*] + *chi*] and *ka* 'possible' links with *shobun* 'dispose' and then attaches to *shotoku* 'income' [[*ka* + *shobun*] + *shotoku*]. Probably these are not provisional words that the reporter made up and used in the newspaper but are words that are used in government statistics and were then used as previously formed words in the newspaper.

3. Those due to compositional combination of word-forming elements

Sino-Japanese words have the property that they can be strung together to form a single chunk, and the fact that this is the culprit behind the formation of long words in Japanese is widely known. The reason that job titles and the names of events are long is due to the fact that they are composed of Sino-Japanese words.

Clarification of the grammatical rules for combining Sino-Japanese words is needed, but this is a problem that precedes composition of a written work and is a general problem concerning the composition of Sino-Japanese words. It is an important topic for research, but we will leave it aside here except to note that the combinability of Sino-Japanese words is brought into play in the writing of newspaper articles as well as in other venues.

A contracted form like the *dōtō Guritobiken-kō seiatsu* [aforementioned.island Grytviken-harbor gain.control.of] 'gain control of Grytviken Harbor on the island (South Georgia)' in the following example is something that arises in the process of composition.

26-nichi Eikokuseifu   wa,   25-nichi no   dōtō   Guritobiken-kō
26-day   English.government   TOP 25-day   GEN aforementioned.island Grytviken-harbor

seiatsu   ni   tsuzuite, mōhitotsu no   yōkō   Rīsu mo senryō
gain-control   DAT following another.one GEN   important.harbor   Leith also occupy

sita   to   happyō   sita.
do.PST   QUOTE   announce do.PST
'On the 26th, the English government announced that, following the taking of control of the harbor of Grytviken on the 25th, it had also occupied the important harbor of Leith.'

(4/27 Asahi)

B. "Loose" provisional word nouns

There are cases in which, although the nouniness of a chunk is clear, it is not clear at a glance where the chunk begins.

1. Chunks containing phrases that include *no* [GEN]

Shakaitō   ga   57-nendo   yosan'an   no   kumikae yōkyūan   wo
Socialist.Party NOM   57-fiscal.year budget.plan   GEN restructure demand.proposal ACC
 matometa   hoka ….
 put.together.NPST   in.addition.to

'In addition to the Socialist Party putting together a draft for their demand for the
restructuring of the fiscal year 57 budget proposal, …'

<div align="right">(2/24 Yomiuri)</div>

If *-an* 'plan, draft' were not attached, the underlined portion would divide into two
relatively long phrases *57-nendo yosan'an no* [57-fiscal.year budget.plan GEN] and *kumikae
yōkyū* [restructure demand], but since the *-an* embraces the whole string, everything from
57-nendo through *yōkyūan* [draft.of.demand] forms a single provisional word.

Nihon Sekiyu ga   Sekiyu Yushutsukoku   Kikō (OPEC)   no
Nippon Oil   NOM   Oil   Exporting.countries   Organization (OPEC) GEN
kettei   machi   no   shisei   de   nozonde   ita   tame ….
decision waiting GEN posture with anticipate.GER   be.PST because
'Since Nippon Oil was anticipating (it) taking the position of waiting for OPEC's decision, …'

<div align="right">(3/26 Asahi)</div>

Since it is Nippon Oil that is waiting for the decision of OPEC and not OPEC doing the
waiting, *Sekiyu Yushutsukoku Kikō (OPEC) no kettei machi* needs to be treated as a single
unit.

Burejinefu-Soren   Shokichō   ga   24-nichi   Tashikento   de
Brezhnev-Soviet.Union   Secretary.General   NOM   24-day   Tashkent   at

okonatta   taiChū   wakai   no   yobikake wa, <u>Ōshū</u>
 take.place.PST   toward.China   settlement GEN call.for   TOP Europe

sen'ikikaku   no   ippōteki   tōketsu enzetsu   ni   tsuzuite,
theater.nuclear.weapons GEN unilateral freeze speech   DAT   following

Soren   ga   kono isshūkan, sekkyokuteki ni
Soviet.Union   NOM   this one.week affirmative   ADV

<div align="center">11</div>

uchidashita   *"heiwa kōsei"*   *no*   *ugoki*   *dearu.*
propose.PST   "peace offensive"   GEN movement COP.NPST

'Secretary General of the Soviet Union Brezhnev's call for a settlement with China that happened in Tashkent on the 24th, following on his speech calling for a unilateral freeze on nuclear weapons in the European theater, is a movement in the "peace offensive" the Soviet Union has affirmatively proposed.'

(3/26 Asahi)

Given that it was a speech with *Ōshū sen'ikikaku no ippōteki tōketsu* [European theater.nuclear.weapon GEN unilateral freeze] as its content, the whole string from *Ōshū* to *enzetsu* forms a nearly indivisible chain of words.

Tōi   *ikoku*   *de, sabishii*   *bannen*   *wo okutte*   *iru*   *Nihon*
far.off   alien.country LOC lonely   final.years ACC pass.GER   be.NPST Japan

kokuseki   *no rōjin   taisaku* *nitsuite*   *wa, sennen*,
citizenship GEN aged   policy   regarding TOP last.year

kokkai *de*   *mondai* *ni*   *sareta*   *koto*   *ga*   *aru.*
Diet   LOC problem   DAT hold.to.be.PST   NMLZ   NOM   exist.NPST
'Policies regarding the aged with Japanese citizenship living out their lonely last days in a far-off alien country were held last year in the Diet to be a problem.'

(3/26 Asahi)

This *taisaku* 'policy' is neither a general *rōjin taisaku* 'policy regarding the aged' nor a *Nihon kokuseki no rōjin taisaku* 'policy regarding the aged with Japanese citizenship'. Since it is a problem that starts from *tōi ikoku* 'far away foreign countries', the entire underlined portion must be treated as an unusual provisional word. The person who wrote this sentence most likely did not think of it as having such a structure, but from its logic, this is the structure it has. If the sentence had included a phrase like *ni taisuru* 'with regard to' as in *rōjin ni taisuru taisaku* 'a policy with regard to the aged', such a problem would not have arisen.

F4 fantomu   *sentōki*   *no*   *bakugeki sōchi*   *kaishūhi*   *mondai de,*
F4 Phantom   fighter.plane GEN bombing equipment   repair.costs problem on

Shūin   *yosan'i*   *no*   *shingi*   *ga*   *kūten*
Lower.House.of.the Diet budget.committee GEN deliberations NOM   go.in.circles

shita tame ….
do.PST   because

'Since the deliberations in the Lower House Budget Committee have been stalled over the question of repair costs for the bombing equipment of the F4 Phantom fighters, …'

<div align="right">(2/18 Asahi)</div>

Shinai   hantō   no   henkan hantai undō   no   kyoten tonatte
Sinai   peninsula GEN   return oppose movement GEN base become.GER

iru   Shinai hantō   Yamitto chiku ….
be.NPST Sinai   peninsula Yamit   region

'The area around Yamit on the Sinai Peninsula which has become the base for the movement opposing the return of the Sinai Peninsula …'

<div align="right">(2/18 Asahi)</div>

Kono chiku   no   kyūsui   paipu   no   <u>tekkyo   kōji</u>   ga
this   region   GEN water.supply pipe   GEN removal   construction.work NOM

hajimatta   toki ni wa …
begin.PST   time in TOP
'When work to remove water pipes in this region began, …'

<div align="right">(2/18 Asahi)</div>

Shōrai   wa   nōsanbutsu   no   kakō
future   TOP agricultural.products GEN processing

<u>kōjō</u>   wo   tsukuru   keikaku   mo   atta.
factory   ACC build.NPST   plan   also exist.PST
'There was even a plan to build a plant to process agricultural products in the future.'

<div align="right">(2/18 Asahi)</div>

Kikanshi   wo   wakamonogonomi   no   <u>jōhōshi-fū</u>   ni
bulletin   ACC young.people.preference GEN information.magazine.style DAT

tsukuri-kaeru   nado,   kufū   wo   korashite ….
make-change.NPST et.cetera   efforts   ACC concentrate.GER
'There were efforts to recast the party organ as an informational magazine appealing to young people, and …'

(3/26 Asahi)

Kōsokudōro   no   sōkōchū   *ni*   *kurankushafuto*   *ga*   *oreta.*
expressway   GEN running.while   in   crankshaft   NOM   break.PST
'The crankshaft broke in the middle of travelling along the expressway.'

(4/27 Asahi)

Beikokunai   *nimo*   *Washinton   no   Ajia seisakujō,*   *ima   no*
America.domestic   LOC.also Washington GEN Asia policy.in.terms.of   now   GEN

Nikkan-kankei   *wa   hōchi*   *dekinai*   *dankai   ni*
Japan-Korea-relation   TOP abandon   can.NEG.NPST   stage   LOC

chikazuite   *iru*   *toiu*   *ninshiki*   *ga*   *takamatte iru.*
approach.GER   be.NPST QUOTE   consciousness   NOM   rise.GER   be.NPST

'There is a rising consciousness in America as well that in terms of Washington's Asia policies, the current Japan-Korea relationship cannot be neglected.'

(5/4 Mainichi)

Tōkyō   shōbōgawa   *wa,*   *issakunen*   *no*   *Kawaji   Purinsu   Hoteru*
Tokyo   firefighters.side TOP   year.before.last   GEN   Kawaji   Prince   Hotel

kasai   *igo,*   *tonai*   *no*   *hoteru,*   *ryokan nado …*   *wo   sasatu*
 fire.disaster   since in.Tokyo   GEN hotel   inn   et.cetera …ACC inspect

'The Tokyo Fire Department has inspected hotels, inns, and like places … in Tokyo since the Kawaji Prince Hotel disaster year before last.'

(2/24 Yomiuri)

The reader may well wonder, after reading these eight examples, why they are given as examples of provisional words. The connections among the phrases appear at first glance to be completely natural. However, closer inspection shows their relations to be as shown below.

[{F4 fantomu sentōki no bakugeki sōchi kaishū} hi] mondai

[{Shinai hantō no henkan} hantai] undo

[kyūsui paipu no tekkyo] kōji

[nōsanbutsu no kakō] kōjō

[wakamonogonomi no jōhōshi] fū

[kōsokudōro no sōkō] chū

[Washinton no Ajia seisaku] jō

[issakunen no Kawaji Purinsu Hoteru kasai] igo

The suffix-like noun at the end of the underlined portion does not bear only on the noun in the phrase to which it is attached but bears on the whole portion enclosed within the square brackets, including the leading phrase ending in *no* 'GEN'.

2. Chunks containing phrases that include particles other than *no* [GEN]

The examination of phrases with *no* 'GEN' above has clearly shown that provisional words including such phrases arise easily, but phrases with particles other than *no* also give rise to provisional nouns.

Kyōsantō   wo nozoku   yatō   tōitsu yōkyūan   toshite ….
Communist.Party   ACC omit.NPST opposition.party unify   demand.plan as
'As a plan to seek unification of the opposition parties other than the Communist Party, …'

(2/24 Yomiuri)

Kyōsantō wo nozoku 'omitting the Communist Party' modifies *yatō* 'opposition parties', but, since *yatō* is swallowed up inside *yatō tōitsu yōkyūan* 'plan seeking to unite the opposition parties', the entire underlined portion becomes one continuous chunk.

<u>*Sotsugyō ni hitsuyō   na   tan'i shutoku*</u> *ni yotei   wo*
graduation for necessary ADN   credits acquire   to   schedule ACC
uwamawaru nissū   ga   kakari …
surpass.NPST number.of.days NOM take
'Taking a number of days more than scheduled for the acquisition of the credits necessary for graduation, …'

(3/26 Asahi)

It is not *tan'i shutoku* 'credit acquisition' that is necessary for *sotsugyō* 'graduation'; the problem is in the *shutoku* 'acquisition' of *sotsugyō ni hitsuyō na tan'i* 'credits necessary for graduation'.

> *Yasukutemo,* <u>*chotto   ii   fun'ikizukuri*</u>   *ga*
> cheap.even   somewhat good atmosphere.building   NOM
> *konomareru   n   deshō   ne.*
> prefer.PASS.NPST   NMLZ   COP.TENTATIVE SFP
> 'Creating a somewhat good atmosphere even though it may be cheap is probably preferred, don't you think.'
>
> (3/26 Asahi)

It's not that *fun'ikizukuri* 'creating an atmosphere' is *chotto ii* 'somewhat good'; instead, what is being argued as being preferred is creating *chotto ii fun'iki* 'a somewhat good atmosphere'.

3. Chunks due to coordinate structure

This refers to cases in which more than two items are strung together and an item added to the last item in the string applies not only to the item it is added to but also to preceding items.

> *Jūgyōin   nitaisuru   * <u>*shoki shōka   ya*</u>
> employees   directed.toward early fire.extinguishing   and
>
> <u>*hinan   yūdō   kunren*</u> *ga   futettei   datta.*
> evacuation direction   training NOM   not.thorough COP.PST
> 'The training for employees in early fire extinguishing and evacuation direction was not sufficiently thorough.'
>
> (2/24 Yomiuri)

The *kunren* 'training' applies not only to *hinan yūdō* 'directing evacuation' but also to *shoki shōka* 'early fire extinguishing'. If the phrasing were changed to *shoki shōka kunren ya hinan yūdō kunren* 'training in early fire extinguishing and training in directing evacuation' by repeating the *kunren* or if the genitive case marker *no* were inserted as in *shoki shōka ya hinan yūdō no kunren* 'training in early fire extinguishing and in directing evacuation' the emergence of such an unstable provisional word could have been avoided.

> *Taihan   wa   senro,* <u>*tetsudōrin,   eki   yōchi   nado*</u>   *toshite*
> greater.part TOP train.track railroad.forest   station site   et.cetera   as
> *tsukawarete   iru   ga ….*

16

use.PASS.GER   be.NPST   but

'The greater part is used for sites for things like train tracks, railroad forests, and stations.'

(3/26 Asahi)

The *yōchi* 'sites' referred to are probably *senro yōchi* 'train track sites' and *tetsudōrin yōchi* 'railroad forest sites' in addition to *eki yōchi* 'sites for train stations'.

The addition of *tomo* 'both, all' after a string also adds a sense of inseparability.

Sarani,   oroshi   bukka, shōhisha bukka tomo, ichidan   to   ochitsuki wo
furthermore wholesale prices   consumer prices both   one.level ADV   stability   ACC

mashita.
increase.PST

'Furthermore, wholesale prices and consumer prices both have further increased in stability.'

(2/24 Yomiuri)

Meimoku   seichō   wa,   4~6-gakki,   7~9-gakki   tomo,
nominal   growth TOP April-June.period July-August.period   both

itidan   to   ochitsuki wo   mashita.
one.level ADV   stability   ACC increase.PST

'Nominal growth showed further increases in stability in both the second and third quarters.'

(2/24 Yomiuri)

4. Nouns with verbal or adjectival properties.

There are many Sino-Japanese words that could be called non-conjugating verbs, which have the form of nouns but with verbal semantic content.

Ippō   dewa,   akajishukushō   ga   kokkateki kadaito
one.side on.TOP red.ink.shrinkage   NOM   national   issue QUOTE

sareru   jiki ni kakari,   tōi   shōrai   no   tochikatsuyō
hold.to.be.PASS.NPST time to approach distant future   GEN land.use

yori tōmen   no   shūnyūzō   wo   yūsen
than   current GEN income.increase ACC favor

saseru   keikō   ga   tsuyomatta.

cause.to.NPST   tendency   NOM   strengthen.PST

'On the other hand, approaching a time when reducing red ink is considered a national issue, the tendency to favor immediate increase in income over land use in the distant future has grown stronger.'

<div align="right">(3/26 Asahi)</div>

Shukushō 'shrink, reduce', *katsuyō* 'put to use', and *-zō* 'increase' are all Sino-Japanese words with verbal properties and they form noun phrases that function verbally, as in *akaji wo shukushō suru koto* [red.ink ACC reduce do NMLZ] 'reducing red ink', *tochi wo katsuyō suru koto* [land ACC put.to.use do NMLZ] 'putting land to use', and *shūnyū wo fuyasuᵛ koto* [income ACC increase NMLZ] 'increasing income'.

> *Toshin*   *wo*   <u>*kakunenryōyusō*</u> /
> center.of.Tokyo   ACC nuclear.fuel.transport /
> *Shimin gurūpu ga   kōgikōdō*
> citizen group   NOM   protest.activity
> 'Transportation of nuclear fuel through the center of Tokyo / Citizens' group holds protest activity'

This example was taken from a headline in the March 12 Mainichi newspaper. Since the beginning has *toshin wo* 'through Tokyo downtown', the structure is not *kakunenryō wo yusō* [nuclear.fuel ACC transport] and the whole string *kakunenryōyusō* functions as a single (motion) verb.

In the following, the *ōte* 'big company' of *saiōte* 'biggest company' is a native Japanese word that would probably be better viewed as a nominal adjective than as a noun. This adjectival property spreads to include the preceding word, forming a nominal adjective *sekiyugyōkaisaiōte* 'biggest company in the field of petroleum', which modifies Nippon Oil.

> *Sekiyu   gyōkai   saiōte   no Nippon   Sekiyu wa* ….
> [petroleum business.world biggest company   GEN Nippon   Oil   TOP]
> 'Nippon Oil, the biggest company in the field of petroleum, ….'

<div align="right">(3/26 Asahi)</div>

We have observed above pretty much all the ways in which provisional words are formed as a step in creating a written work.

IV. Bidirectionality in lexical operations in the process of creating sentences

The action of creating a sentence consists of consolidating one's thoughts in words and, at the same time, putting the consolidated units together in a structured way, but, when consolidating, there are two directions in which one can move: 1) the approach of putting together the largest units possible and then using the simplest structure possible to put the units together, and 2) the approach of making the units as small as possible and, following grammatical rules closely, putting the units together like the mesh of a net.

Provisional words are the result of building the largest units possible. When it was pointed out that a provisional word that appeared in an earlier example, *taiBei, taiSo, taisaku no konponteki minaoshi kiun* 'momentum for fundamentally re-evaluating policies toward America and toward the Soviet Union' would come out as *taiBei seisaku to taiSo seisaku to wo konponteki ni minaosō to suru kiun* 'momentum for attempting to fundamentally re-evaluate policies toward America and policies toward the Soviet Union' if the underlined portion were to be restated fully spelled out, this is what was being described. Actually, since *taiBei seisaku* 'policy toward America' and *taiSo seisaku* 'policy toward the Soviet Union' are already provisional words, if one were to further break it down, it would come out as *Amerika ni taisuru seisaku to Soren ni taisuru seisaku* 'policy taken toward America and policy taken toward the Soviet Union' or, perhaps, *Amerika to Soren ni taisuru seisaku* 'policies taken toward America and the Soviet Union'. Therefore, the provisional word in question would be *Amerika to Soren ni taisuru seisaku wo konpon kara minaosō to suru kiun* 'momentum for attempting to re-evaluate from the fundamentals policies taken with regard to America and the Soviet Union'. If this were to be spoken aloud, it would take the phrasing *Amerika to / Soren ni / taisuru / seisaku wo / konpon kara / minaosō to / suru / kiun* in which each phrase is composed solely of short, ordinary words. This is the process of taking small units and, following the rules of grammar closely, neatly composing a sentence.

When doing language processing on a computer, it would seem that there are, again, two approaches: one is to analyze everything, right down to the terminal/ultimate phenomena using one's own program and the other is to do the higher-level, overall analysis with one's own program and to use prewritten routines and previously prepared tables to handle the fine-level terminal/ultimate phenomena. In terms of designing and constructing a building, the former approach is like hand-crafting everything from drawing the plans to selecting decorations for the interior so one is completely satisfied; the latter approach is like putting together just the basic plans and general parameters based on one's own ideas and handling the rest with parts selected off the shelf. If one industrializes the means of production and gears up for large-scale production, the approach plugging in premade parts is inescapable.

The same dichotomy can be found in composition writing. Creating a long provisional word, making a large nominal chunk, and using it with the simplest grammar rules possible – doesn't this function well for mass production composition? I think that it is probably a result of this tendency that provisional words are commonly found in newspaper writing.

A newspaper article does not demand fine, detailed writing. Since what we expect of a newspaper is the rapid delivery of a large quantity of information, even though creating provisional words may result in some grammatical distortion, as long as the meaning is easy to understand, it is good, and if the meaning can be grasped at a glance, that is even better. In such a case, sentences end up being created using a lot of *kanji* in quickly synthesized semantic units linked together in a loosely logical way. The deep relation between modern newspapers and provisional words is thusly maintained.

The opposite of sentences using a lot of provisional words would be sentences composed of *bunsetsu* consisting of only a single independent word, possibly accompanied by dependent particles or auxiliary verbs. The sentences in elementary school language textbooks are for the most part sentences of this form. The following is an example. *Bunsetsu* units are separated by virgules.

Ichido / Ueno Dōbutsuen de, / konna / koto ga / atta. / Yūgata, /
once / at Ueno Zoo/ this.kind.of / thing NOM/ happened / evening /

kankyaku ga / kaetta / ato, / ennaimimawari no /
visitors NOM / returned / after / park.inside.patrol GEN /

yakei ga / inu wo / tsurete / aruite / ita. / Kangarū no /
nightwatch.man NOM / dog / leading / walking / was / kangaroo GEN /

saku no / mae made / kuru to, / ima made / otonashiku / shite /
enclosure GEN / before up.to / come when / now up.to / calm / act /

ita / kangarū ga, / kyū ni / saku wo / tobikoete /
was / kangaroo NOM / sudden ADV / enclosure ACC / jump.over /

nigeta.
escaped

Doko no / dōbutsuen demo / kangarū no / iru / tokoro no /
where GEN / zoo at.also / kangaroo GEN / be / place GEN /

saku no / takasa wa / ni-mētoru shika / nai. / Kore dake /

enclosure GEN / height TOP / 2-meters NPI.only / not.be / this only /

areba, / nigenainoda. / Tokoro ga, / kono / baai, / kangarū ga /
if.there.is / will.not.escape / but / this / case / kangaroo NOM /

totsuzen / taiteki dearu / inu wo / hakken sita. / Jibun wa, /
suddenly / arch-enemy is / dog ACC / discover did / self TOP /

san-mētoru ijō / janpu dekiru kara / inu mo / ni-mētoru no /
3-meters more.than / jump can since / dog also / 2-meters GEN /

saku wo / koete, / jibun wo / osotte / kuru kamo / shirenai. /
enclosure ACC / cross / self ACC / attack / come perhaps / can't know /

Shikamo, / saku no / naka wa / semai. / Ima no /
moreover / enclosure GEN / inside TOP / narrow / present GEN /

uchi ni / saku no / soto ni / tobidashite / nigenai to /
within / enclosure GEN / outside to / jump.out / not.escape if /

inochi ga / abunai to / kangaete / nigedasita no darō.
life NOM / in.danger QUOTE / thinking / escaped NMLZ probably

<div align="right">(Atarashii Kokugo 5 Jō "Dōbutsu no Nōryoku")</div>

'Once, at the Ueno Zoo, this sort of thing happened. In the evening, after the visitors had gone home, the night watchman who patrolled the zoo was walking with a dog. When they came to the kangaroo enclosure, the kangaroo, which had been quiet until then, suddenly jumped over the enclosure and fled.

In any zoo, the enclosures around where kangaroos are are only two meters high. If there's this height, the kangaroos will not escape. However, in this case, the kangaroo suddenly discovered its arch-enemy, the dog. It probably thought "Since I can jump more than three meters high, the dog may cross over the two-meter enclosure and attack me. Moreover, the enclosure is small. If I do not jump outside and escape now, my life will be in danger," and fled.' (Atarashii Kokugo 5 Volume 1, "The Abilities of Animals")

In this passage there are only two strings *ennaimimawari* 'patrol the zoo' and *san-mētoru ijō* 'more than three meters' that look like provisional words. In addition, if one

were to really push, there is *Ueno Dōbutsuen*, but this is such a familiar word that it doesn't feel like a provisional combination. Since a quantity expression like *san-mētoru ijō* is also something heard and used every day, it also doesn't have a provisional feel to it. As for *ennaimimawari no yakei* 'zoo patrolling night watchman', it could be rephrased as *ennnai wo mimawaru yakei* [inside.the.zoo ACC patrol.NPST night.watchman], but the original *ennaimimawari no* better reflects that patrolling every day is an occupational act. Other than using this one very short provisional word for this rhetorical effect, all the other *bunsetsu* consist solely of words used in their ordinary meanings. This is a somewhat older type of finely detailed Japanese sentence.

V.   The importance of the *bunsetsu* unit

I have come to think that Japanese is a language that is truly well supported by the *bunsetsu* unit. The term *bunsetsu* was created by HASHIMOTO Shinkichi, and in Hashimoto's grammar, analysis of a sentence starts with breaking it down into *bunsetsu*, but a unit almost identical to the *bunsetsu* was given the name *ku* 'phrase' in JINBŌ Kaku's 1922 *Gengogaku Gairon* [Introduction to Linguistics].

Either *bunsetsu* or *ku* is fine as a name for the unit. In any case, I believe that a small pronunciation unit consisting of a single semantic unit together with a particle makes Japanese invulnerable. I would like to consider the following to be characteristics of the *bunsetsu* unit.

   (1) It makes the phonetic form of a structure that may be semantically complex
        extremely simple.

Perhaps an analogy can be made between the *bunsetsu* and the *ninja*'s chain of bamboo tubes where each unit is of pretty much the same length and, when taken singly, appear to be basically random, pretty much the same, with little to distinguish them, but a strong yank on the string joining them inside turns them into an incarnate version of a mythical war staff and allows the intended task to be performed.

A sentence, of course, has a three-dimensional structure. This can be described using the grammatical theories of Yamada, Hashimoto, or Matsushita. It can also be described in various ways using generative grammar tree diagrams, dependency grammar, or an immediate constituency analysis. The approach I find most compelling is the nested box structure in Tokieda's grammar.

The fundamental difference between Hashimoto's linked *bunsetsu* and Tokieda's nested box structure is that, in the linked *bunsetsu* theory, no matter how large a chunk the elements of a sentence may be aggregated into, in the end they are viewed as links between equivalent *bunsetsu*, whereas in the nested boxes structure, the unit *bunsetsu* is

eliminated from the structural theory and sentence structure is seen as a relation between the *shi* 'independent units' created up to that level and the particles that attach to them.

While meaning and sound are related in a language, at the same time they can in a sense be treated as if they were unrelated. The semantic structure of a Japanese sentence is that of nested structures, to be sure, but speech is definitely supported by the *bunsetsu* unit. When we hear, speak, read, or write a Japanese sentence, we create a nested structure in our minds, creating a semantic realm, but the visual or audio perceptions are, without a doubt, in the form of *bunsetsu*. What allows us to treat the language that in our minds has a layered structure, as monostratal in its external visual or audio form and simplify it is the *bunsetsu* unit.

> (2) It allows words that are in different dimensions in terms of structure to be given the same treatment when uttered.

For example, when one says *sekaiteki ni yūmei na jinbutsu* 'a person who is globally famous', it is phrased as *sekaiteki ni / yūmei na / jinbutsu* following the division into *bunsetsu*, but semantically, since the degree to which the person is famous is taken to be on a global scale, the adnominal particle *na* actually attaches to whole chunk *seikaiteki ni yūmei* 'globally famous' and not just to *yūmei* 'famous'. The adverbial marker *ni* is attached just to *sekaiteki* and after being inserted into *yūmei*, *sekaiteki ni* no longer has an independent existence but is an element that takes on part of *yūmei*. However, when the phrase is spoken, without regard to this embedding or being embedded, forms like *sekaiteki ni* and *yūmei na* have the same form and are pronounced with the same weight. Tokieda takes the case of *tabako wo kai ni iku* 'go to buy cigarettes' and interprets it as the verb phrase *tabako wo kau* 'buy cigarettes' being nominalized as is to the noun phrase *tabako wo kai*, having the directional particle *ni* added, becoming the goal of the action of *iku* 'go'. I can offer absolutely no counter argument; that is exactly how it is in terms of its meaning and structure. However, when spoken, it is uttered as *tabako wo / kai ni / iku*.

> (3) It insures a looseness of word order.

Japanese is known around the world as a language that is tolerant in terms of word order. This is probably because the *bunsetsu* unit has quite a high degree of independence. Because the sound system and the semantic system follow different principles, as long as the order between the *shi* 'independent units' and *ji* 'dependent, bound units' is not disturbed, is it not the case that, even should the order of *bunsetsu* units be scrambled to some extent, in our heads we can freely re-arrange them to reconstruct the logical structure? The *ninja*'s bamboo tubes may vary somewhat in terms of their hardness, but the order of the tubes cannot be changed. In this sense, *bunsetsu* are even more convenient than bamboo tubes.

(4) It allows boundaries between *bunsetsu* units even within a provisional word.

Earlier the case of provisional words containing *bunsetsu* with the genitive particle *no* was discussed. From a semantic point of view, that indicates that a string of two or more *bunsetsu* has formed a provisional word, but that doesn't mean that when one utters such a sentence the provisional word must be pronounced as a single unbroken unit. For example, in the case of the *rōjin taisaku* 'policy toward the elderly' sentence, when it is spoken there is absolutely no problem with breaking it into *bunsetsu* units as below.

> *Tŏi / ikoku de, / sabishii / bannen wo / okutte / iru / Nihon-kokuseki no / rōjin taisaku ni / tsuite wa, / ….*

(5) It allows the insertion of pauses even into long Sino-Japanese words

The tendency discussed in the previous section can be taken even further; even more tightly bound provisional words do not reject the insertion of pauses. For example, in the following headline (2/18 Yomiuri), although both *kaigaitan kyūtō* 'sudden increase in the price of foreign coal' and *genpatsu yūsen* 'give preference to nuclear generation' are unquestionably provisional words, there is nothing strange about breaking them up and saying them as *kaigaitan / kyūtō de / genpatsu / yūsen.*

> *Kaigaitan kyūtō   de   genpatsu   yūsen*
> foreign.coal sudden.price.rise   with   nuclear.power.generation   preference
> 'preference for nuclear generation because of sudden increase in the price of foreign coal'

> *Sameta "sekitan   netsu" denryoku   gyōkai*
> cool.PST coal   fever   electric.power   business.world
> 'the electric power industry whose "coal fever" has cooled'

In the example given earlier of *25-nichi no dōtō Guritobiken-kō seiatsu ni tsuzuite* 'following gaining control of Grytviken Harbor on the aforementioned island (South Georgia)', certainly *dōtō Guritobiken-kō seiatsu* is a provisional word, but there is definitely nothing unnatural in breaking it up and saying it with the following phrasing. *25-nichi no / dōtō / Guritobiken-kō / seiatsu ni / tsuzuite …*

Here is what makes a provisional word a provisional word. Since it is originally an ad hoc combination, if it becomes long and difficult to say as a single chunk, there is no problem with inserting pauses in word-like boundaries. No change arises in the semantic structure as a result.

The *bunsetsu* unit, as described above, is above all a speech unit and, because it does not govern semantic structure, it ensures the freedom of Japanese.

VI. VI. Permanence and temporariness of words

The definition of just what a word is is difficult for anyone, but whether it can be defined or not, language use begins with the word. There can be no linguistic expression without stringing words together.

The reason we think of a dictionary as being a collection of words is that we believe that the correspondence between a single unit of meaning and a single string of sounds is fixed within a given linguistic society. If it were not fixed, then even if one should manage to learn a word, it would be useless. If a person were the only one not to know what has been fixed in society, it would be impossible for that person to participate in social life, so we believe it to be necessary to know the words in the dictionary.

However, there are degrees of fixedness. The more things are fixed over a wide area and over a long period of time, the higher the degree of fixedness. Things that are fixed only over a small area are dialects and things that are fixed only over a short period of time are words peculiar to a historical period.

Speaking in terms of sound length, probably the shortest phonetic form that can carry meaning would be a single syllable. A single phoneme that does not include a vowel cannot carry meaning. A single syllable such as *ha* 'leaf' or *chi* 'blood' can carry meaning, but in a language with a simple syllable structure like Japanese, it cannot be the most appropriate form and would lack stability as a word. When a word becomes two syllables or three syllables in length, then the fixedness of the correspondence between sound and meaning is the highest. The reason that the basic form of words in Chinese is a single syllable is that the phonetic form of a syllable in Chinese is incomparably longer and richer in variety than that of Japanese and becomes even richer when tones are added.

A so-called simple word in Japanese is usually composed of two or three syllables, like *yama* 'mountain', *kawa* 'river', *hana* 'flower', *nabe* 'pot', or like *kuruma* 'vehicle, *chikara* 'strength', *hikari* 'light'. Since forms like these are the simplest forms bearing meaning, they are also called "morphemes" in linguistic terminology. Even when they are low in independence like the *tō* in *tōi* 'far' and the *chika* in *chikai* 'close' or like the *shizu* in *shizuka* 'quiet' and the *yawa* in *yawaraka* 'soft', the shortest forms bearing meaning are still considered morphemes. These simple words and morphemes show the greatest degree of fixedness in the correspondence between sound and meaning, and as long as Japanese speak Japanese, they will probably never change. That is, they have the highest degree of permanence as words.

Compound words are composed of simple words. Compounds like *tanisoko* [valley+bottom] 'bottom of a valley', *sunahama* [sand+beach] 'sandy beach', *wakamono* [young+people] 'young people', and *toshiyori* [age+approach] 'older people' also have a

high degree of fixedness and have stable existences as single words. However, the combination *wakatoshiyori* [young+age+approach] only shows the title of a government office in the Tokugawa Shogunate and *nabesokokeiki* [pot+bottom+economy] 'lingering recession' only describes economic conditions arising in the Showa era. In general, the higher the degree of compounding, the lower the level of fixedness in the correspondence between sound and meaning and eventually the relation to a general purpose dictionary grows weaker. At the same time, long words enter the province of specialist dictionaries in various fields and of dictionaries of neologisms. Word like *ichiokusōzange* 'infinite regret for waging the war', *ichiokusōhakuchika* 'infinite idiotization (said of television)', *nihyakukairijidai* 'two hundred nautical mile era', or *shirakesedai* 'the disaffiliated generation' were all limited to a particular period of social history. Words like these were provisional words that grew out of the societal situation of the times. The topic of this article is the even more temporary, fleeting provisional words that only have word status in the particular sentence in which they have been composed.

Proper nouns (such as the personal names mentioned at the beginning of this article as examples of provisional words arising in real-life scenes) have a special status. Although they were created as temporary items, once they were created, they became linked to the existence of a particular individual item, as a representative of that individual, but, once formed, have continued together with the people who made and use them, coming to have an extremely stable permanence. *Ninigi no Mikoto* [lively GEN lord] and *Ugaya fukiahezu no Mikoto* [feather-thatched.roof not.joined GEN lord][vi] have attained such status.

ⁱ *Jugemu* is a Japanese folktale and *rakugo* story that involves the repetition of a ridiculously long (106 mora) name that begins with *Jugemu jugemu … .*

ⁱⁱ Glossed as NMLZ 'nominalizer' in this translation.

ⁱⁱⁱ Found in the creation stories of the *Kojiki.*

^{iv} The name of a television series that ran in 25 episodes from 1973 into 1974. The relevant part is *taikutsu.otoko* 'boring.man', which is a compound with the same meaning as *taikutsu na otoko* [boring ADN man].

^v *Zō* is the Sino-Japanese reading of 増, which is also used to write the native Japanese verb *fuyasu* (増やす). Both can be glossed 'increase'.

^{vi} Both are characters in the Japanese creation story recorded in the *Kojiki* and mentioned at the beginning of the article as examples of long personal names. The first, *Ninigi no Mikoto* is actually the short version of *Amenigishi kuninigishi amatsuhitakahiko hononinigi no Mikoto*, who was the grandchild of *Amaterasu Ōmikami*, and the second, *Ugaya fukiahezu no Mikoto* is the short version of *Amatsuhitakahiko nagisatake ugaya fukiahezu no Mikoto*, who was the grandchild of the first and was the father of the mythical first emperor *Jimmu.*

Abbreviations used in glosses

ACC	accusative
ADN	adnominal
ADV	adverbial
COP	copula
DAT	dative
GEN	genitive
GER	gerundive
LOC	locative
NEG	negative
NMLZ	nominalizer
NOM	nominative
NPI	negative polarity item
NPST	non-past
PASS	passive
PROV	provisional
PST	past
SFP	sentence final particle
TOP	topic

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