CLASSIFICATION AND GENERAL PATTERNS OF VERB-CONTAINING LEXICAL UNITS IN JAPANESE

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Annotatsiya: Maqolada yapon tilidagi fe'l tarkibli leksik birliklar struktur, semantik va funksional mezonlar asosida tasniflanadi. Sodda fe'lli birikmalar, V+V qo'shma fe'llar, ot+suru konstruksiyalari, frazeologik birliklar, yordamchi fe'lli konstruksiyalar va grammatiklashgan fe'l shakllari o'zaro qiyoslanadi. Tasnifda kompozitsionlik, leksiklashuv, valentlik, bosh komponent, aspektual va modal funksiyalar asosiy mezon sifatida olinadi.

Kalit so'zlar: yapon tili, fe'l tarkibli birlik, tasnif, qo'shma fe'l, V+V, suru, frazeologizm, leksiklashuv

Аннотация: В статье предлагается классификация японских лексических единиц с глагольным компонентом по структурным, семантическим и функциональным критериям. Сопоставляются свободные глагольные сочетания, сложные глаголы V+V, конструкции существительное+suru, фразеологизмы, вспомогательные глагольные конструкции и грамматикализованные формы. Основными параметрами являются композиционность, лексикализация, валентность, головной компонент и аспектуально-модальная функция.

Ключевые слова: японский язык, глагольная лексическая единица, классификация, сложный глагол, V+V, suru, фразеология, лексикализация

Abstract: This article proposes a structural, semantic and functional classification of Japanese verb-containing lexical units. The discussion covers simplex-verb combinations, lexical and syntactic V+V compounds, noun+suru predicates, idiomatic verb phrases, auxiliary-verb constructions and grammaticalized verbal patterns. The classification is based on compositionality, lexicalization, headedness, argument-structure integration and semantic function. The article shows that Japanese verbal lexical units form a continuum rather than a set of sharply separated types, and that corpus and lexicographic evidence are essential for distinguishing productive grammatical patterns from established lexical items.

Keywords: Japanese, verb-containing lexical unit, classification, compound verb, V+V, suru, phraseology, lexicalization

Japanese has a wide range of lexical and constructional units organized around verbs. Some are fully productive syntactic combinations, some are conventional compounds, some behave as idioms, and others occupy an intermediate position between lexicon and grammar. A useful classification must therefore go beyond surface form. It should consider internal structure, semantic compositionality, argument integration, productivity and the degree of lexicalization. Research at NINJAL has emphasized

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precisely these interfaces, especially valency alternations, V+V compound verbs and interactions between the lexicon, syntax and semantics [6; 7].

Five criteria are particularly useful. First, structural composition asks what elements form the unit: V alone, N+V, V+V or phrase+V. Second, semantic compositionality asks whether the meaning of the whole can be predicted from its parts. Third, syntactic integration concerns whether the unit behaves like one predicate or retains two predicate domains. Fourth, productivity distinguishes open grammatical patterns from restricted lexical formations. Fifth, functional specialization identifies such roles as aspect, direction, completion, benefaction, modality or interpersonal stance. These criteria produce a multidimensional classification rather than a single rigid hierarchy.

At the most syntactically transparent end are free verb phrases such as hon o yomu "read a book", gakusei ni oshieru "teach a student" and Tōkyō e iku "go to Tokyo". Their internal arguments are independently selected and case-marked, and their meanings are largely compositional. They are not lexical units in the narrowest word-based sense, but they are essential as a baseline because more lexicalized constructions can be identified by comparing them with fully productive combinations.

A highly productive Japanese pattern combines a nominal element with suru "do" to form a predicate: benkyō suru "study", ryokō suru "travel", setsumei suru "explain", kenkyū suru "conduct research". Many such nouns are Sino-Japanese, although borrowed stems also participate, as in kopī suru "copy". These formations vary in lexical tightness. Some have conventional argument structures and lexical meanings comparable to simplex verbs; others remain transparently related to the noun. N+suru predicates therefore illustrate the permeability of the noun–verb boundary in Japanese word formation [2; 4].

V+V compounds are among the most characteristic Japanese verbal formations. NINJAL's Compound Verb Lexicon covers more than 2,700 commonly used V+V compounds, demonstrating both the productivity and lexical richness of the pattern [7]. Examples include kaki-naosu "rewrite", tabe-sugiru "eat too much", omoidasu "recall", tsukai-kiru "use up" and nige-dasu "run away / start fleeing". In lexical compounds, two verbal roots form a single lexical predicate with integrated argument structure. The meaning may be transparent, partially lexicalized or strongly conventionalized.

Japanese scholarship often distinguishes lexical compound verbs from more syntactic complex predicates. In lexical V+V formations, the components form a word-like unit and their argument structures must be integrated into a single predicate. In productive syntactic combinations, the second verb may behave more like an auxiliary or functional predicate that contributes aspectual or directional meaning. The distinction is not always categorical; phonological, semantic and syntactic diagnostics must be considered together. Research on Japanese V+V compounds has repeatedly focused on how the arguments of the component verbs are combined and how lexical semantics constrains this process [5; 8].

A second major group consists of verb-containing units in which the following element contributes phase or aspect. Patterns with -hajimeru "begin", -tsuzukeru "continue", -owaru "finish", -kiru "do completely" and -sugiru "exceed/too much" are highly frequent. Compare yomi-hajimeru "begin reading", ame ga furi-tsuzukeru "the rain continues to fall", hon o yomi-owaru "finish reading the book" and tabe-sugiru "eat too much". These forms range from productive constructional combinations to lexicalized compounds, and their classification depends on semantic and morphosyntactic behavior.

Many V+V units combine manner, direction and path. Examples include kake-komu "rush into", tobi-dasu "jump/fly out; suddenly emerge", mochi-kaeru "take back/home" and nagare-komu "flow into". The first verb often describes manner while the second contributes path or endpoint, but conventional

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lexicalization can alter this division. Such formations are particularly important for typological comparison because Japanese packages motion information differently from English in many contexts.

Idiomatic units such as te o yaku "have trouble handling", kao o tateru "preserve someone's honor" and mizu ni nagasu "let bygones be bygones" are multiword expressions whose global meanings are partly or largely non-compositional. Their internal grammar may look like an ordinary noun–particle–verb phrase, but substitution is restricted and the figurative meaning is conventionalized. They should therefore be classified separately from free collocations even though their surface syntax is similar. Degree of fixedness and semantic transparency are crucial diagnostics [9].

Japanese also uses verbs in constructions that have developed auxiliary-like grammatical functions. The -te form followed by iru contributes progressive/resultative aspect; -te oku expresses preparatory action or maintained result; -te shimau commonly marks completion and may carry regret or unwanted-result implications; -te miru expresses trying an action; -te ageru / kureru / morau encode benefactive perspective. These patterns are constructionally productive, but frequent combinations may also become lexicalized. Their classification therefore requires attention to grammaticalization and discourse function [1; 3].

The types discussed above can be arranged on a continuum. At one end are freely generated syntactic verb phrases. In the middle are productive complex predicates and semi-lexicalized combinations. At the lexical end are established V+V compounds and idioms whose meanings and argument structures are stored conventionally. This continuum explains why attempts to classify every unit as either "word" or "phrase" often encounter borderline cases. Japanese provides strong evidence that lexicalization is gradual and that synchronic grammar contains formations at different historical stages.

Corpus evidence is important for deciding whether a sequence is a recurrent lexical unit, a productive grammatical construction or an accidental combination. Frequency, collocational strength, range of inflection, distribution of arguments and semantic consistency all contribute to classification. NINJAL's BCCWJ-related resources and Compound Verb Lexicon provide a useful empirical basis for such work, linking lexical entries to attested usage. Corpus-based classification is especially valuable when semantic transparency is gradient rather than binary [7; 10].

Table 1. Proposed classification of Japanese verb-containing lexical units

Type	Structural pattern	Typical property	Example
Free verb phrase	NP + particle + V	fully productive/compositional	hon o yomu
N+suru predicate	N + suru	productive verbalization	benkyō suru
Lexical V+V compound	V1 stem + V2	single lexical predicate	omoidasu
Phase/aspect complex	V + functional V	begin/continue/finish etc.	yomi-hajimeru
Directional/manner compound	V1 + V2	manner/path integration	kake-komu
Idiom	phrase + V	restricted, non-compositional	te o yaku
Auxiliary	V-te +	aspect/benefactive/modality	yonde iru

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construction	auxiliary V		

Japanese verb-containing lexical units cannot be classified successfully by form alone. A comprehensive account must combine structural, semantic and functional criteria. Free verb phrases, noun+suru predicates, lexical V+V compounds, aspectual complex predicates, directional compounds, idioms and auxiliary constructions differ in degrees of compositionality, productivity, argument integration and lexicalization. The most important generalization is that the lexicon–syntax boundary is gradient. Some patterns are generated freely, some are productive but constructionally constrained, and others are stored as established lexical items. NINJAL's large-scale lexical projects, including the Compound Verb Lexicon, confirm the empirical importance of V+V formations and provide a strong basis for corpus-informed classification. Such a model is useful not only for theoretical linguistics but also for lexicography, translation and the teaching of Japanese as a foreign language.

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