

Analysis of Word Pairing of Noun-Verb Construction In Japanese Language Learning Textbooks

Ulfah Sutiarty¹, Djodjok Soepardjo², Roni³

{ulfah.20007@mhs.unesa.ac.id¹, djodjoksoepardjo@unesa.ac.id², roni@unesa.ac.id³}

Language and Literature Education Postgraduate Doctoral Program, State University of Surabaya,
East Java^{1,2,3}

Abstract. The purpose of this study was to describe the word pairing of noun-verb construction in Japanese language learning textbooks. The method used in this research is a qualitative approach. The data sources in this study are Japanese language learning textbooks at the shokyu level, namely Minna no Nihongo Shokyu I-II 2nd Edition, and Chukyu/Jokyu level, namely Minna no Nihongo Chukyu I-II. The data collection procedure in the study begins with collecting noun-verb structured word pairing data from the book Minna no Nihongo Shokyu I-II 2nd Edition and Chukyu/Jokyu 'middle/high' level and Minna no Nihongo Chukyu I-II with noun-verb construction. Followed by sorting Verb into 2 (two) parts, namely: ~する動詞 and 和語. The collected word pairings will be analyzed for the closeness of the relationship and clarity of meaning between words based on the theories of Cowie (1998), Hori (2009), and Ima (2006), namely 1) word pairings of noun-verb construction in free combination category, 2) word pairings of noun-verb construction in word pairing category, 3) word pairings of noun-verb construction in idiom category.

Keywords: Word Pairing, Noun-Verb Construction, Textbook.

1 Introduction

The purpose of learning a foreign language is to communicate with the target language community. The desire to communicate with the target language community is because language learners are interested in what is in that community. Japanese is one of the foreign languages that must be studied in Indonesian universities, and there are students. Most of the reasons for studying this foreign language are the desire to become a language teacher, continue their studies, work in a Japanese company, or be interested in Japanese culture. However, learning Japanese is not as easy as we think. There are several reasons why Japanese learners find it difficult to communicate well naturally. These are due to both psychological and technical reasons. The psychological factor associated with language impairment is that

some people find it very difficult to understand a foreign/second language. Technical factors, on the other hand, relate to different rules and norms that are specific to each language.

Different languages have different rules and regulations. This includes not only general rules and norms but also specific rules and norms that can characterize a language. For second/foreign language learners, this type of inequality poses difficulties due to the mismatch of language rules and norms between the learners' mother tongue and the second/foreign language they are learning. The goal of language learning, including foreign languages, is to master the language. Proper and acceptable language use is language use based on language rules, and the acceptance of language use is determined by the rules that apply in a particular language community.

These unbalanced linguistic rules can confuse language learners and can lead to errors, imprecision and even irregularity in the learners' use of the (foreign) language (B1) and the word pair structure of the language to be learned (B2). According to [1], it is important to pay attention not only to the subject and predicate elements but also to the lexical structure elements involved in the way sentences are constructed in order to produce appropriate and acceptable utterances. Vocabulary is one of the indicators of the ability to acquire a foreign language [2]. Word pairing is a linguistic fact that occurs in all languages. There are several theories in the expression of this formulation.

1.1 Word Pairing

The notion of word pairing according to de Saussure is a form of syntagmatic relationship, in other words, each language element has proximity to other elements that are at a linear level (in presentia). The idea of collocation was started by John R. Firth (1890-1960) which etymologically comes from the Latin *locare*, 'to locate', and *cum*, 'together'. But before that, pedagogical studies on first and second language acquisition have mentioned word pairing, which according to them are parts of a language that are understood, memorized and then used by speakers as a whole as a means to achieve language fluency [3]. Even, word pairing has been known and studied by the ancient Greeks.

Harold Palmer (1877-1949 in the early 20th century) pioneered the study of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) by listing over 6,000-word compounds frequently used in teaching and students could learn them in blocks. The further word pairing studies were conducted by Albert Sydney Hornby (1898-1978) who incorporated word pairing information into the dictionaries of the series he started with *ISED, Dictionary of Idiomatic and Syntactic English* (1942), and which continued with *Dictionary of Fluent Learners of English* (1948), *Dictionary of English for Advanced Learners* (1952), and *Oxford Dictionary of Advanced Learners* (reprinted several times). This was followed by the work of Dr. Anthony P. Cowie, Peter Howarth, and Michael Lewis, who regarded collocations as "islands of reliability" of a speaker's speech [4].

From this, we can conclude that word pairing originally emerged from the pedagogical study of language acquisition. It is related to the high level of linguistic proficiency that speakers can only achieve through memory and is a privilege that is only acquired by native speakers. From the pedagogical field, language acquisition on word pairing provides a strong motivation to study, collect, and analyze from the perspective of language teaching. The boundaries of word pairing are words that can be used together for example, which

prepositions and verbs are used together, or which nouns occur with certain verbs [5]. The appearance of two or more words in a short space with each other in a text is called word pairing. The usual measure of proximity is a maximum of four intervening words [6]. Meanwhile, according to [7], there are two elements in word pairing, namely the dominating element called the base, and the next element that functions as a modifier is called the collocator. [8] suggest that word pairing is divided into 2 (two), namely grammatical and lexical word sanding. [9] assert that word pairing is a group of words that tend to appear together. Meanwhile, in the [10] it is explained that word sanding is in every language there are words that combine to produce natural-sounding speech and writing.

Word pairing as a linguistic phenomenon has several aspects that need to be identified for its use in language learning. To identify word sanding there are 2 (two) approaches as revealed by [11] and [12] that word pairing can be identified in 2 (two) different approaches, namely a statistical approach and a phraseological or linguistic-based approach. The definition below clearly states the linguistic status of word pairing is:

1) "the occurrence of two or more lexical items as realizations of structural elements in a given syntactic pattern" [13].

2) "a series of two or more consecutive words, characterized by syntactic and semantic units whose precise and unambiguous meaning or connotation cannot be derived directly from the meaning or connotation of their components."

3) "A word pairing is an expression consisting of two or more words that are the same as the conventional way of saying something." [14].

4) "lexically and/or pragmatically constrained repeated occurrences of at least two lexical items that are in direct syntactic relation to each other" [15].

Word pairing in Japanese is called *rengo*. [16] emphasize that *rengo* is a phrase/clause whose overall meaning can be known from the meaning of each word and each word that makes up it cannot be replaced by another word even with a similar meaning. For example, the phrase *yakusoku wo yaburu*, 'breaking a promise' cannot be replaced by the terms *yakusoku wo kowasu* or *yakusoku wo kuzusu*, even though the verbs *yaburu*, *kowasu*, and *kuzusu* have the same meaning as *yakusoku* and *yaburu*. Another example is the word pairing *kaze wo hiku* 'catch a cold' cannot be replaced with *kaze ni kakaru*, *kaze wo toru*, or *kaze wo motsu*. So it can be concluded that *rengo*, each word already has a counterpart that cannot be replaced with another. Komiya, gives an example of *rengo* (collocation) *yama no sakura* is a word pair, but *yamazakura* is a word, not a word pair.

Word pairing has been used in language teaching to refer to related phrases or clauses that co-occur in a statistically significant way. Word pairing research by utilizing statistics to extract word sanding from corpora is growing. However, the data collected is still unable to distinguish word pairing in detail, which is still unable to separate between "free combination", "collocation" and "idiom" [17]. Meanwhile, according to [13], [18], and [19], there are 3 categories of word pairing based on the closeness of the relationship and clarity of meaning between words. These three categories of word pairing are free combination, collocation, and idiom. Meanwhile, according to [20], this word pairing only consists of collocations by not distinguishing it from free combinations and idioms. This research will provide an empirical basis for building a word pairing database by distinguishing 3 types of word pairing based on the opinions of [13], [18], and [19].

According to [19] and [21] word pairing refers to a polar binary relationship of lexical dependency, where the dominating lexical unit is called "base" and choosing the dominated lexical unit is called "word pairing". In Japanese, the noun is "base", while the verb is "collocated". In the Japanese sentence *hon-o yomu* 'reading', noun- *hon* 'book' serves as the base in this collocation relationship, and selects the verb *yomu* 'reading' as the collocation. At the stage of selecting which unit is the base and which is "collocated" it can be assumed as follows; First, it may be seen that the verb *yomu* 'read' selects nouns such as *hon* 'book' and *kiji* 'article.' In fact, it is widely assumed in the syntactic literature that (i) the verb is the head of the Verb Phrase and (ii) if the verb is transitive, it selects the object NP as its (internal) argument. But here, in the sentence *omoshiroi hon o yonda* 'read an interesting book' *yomu* 'read' does not select the noun *hon* 'book' alone but the whole part of the NP *omoshiroi hon* 'interesting book.' Whereas in the following example sentences are:

「本を ゆっくりと 読んだ」
hon-o yukkurito yonda
'reading the book slowly'

The noun *hon* 'book' is in a collocation relation with the verb *yonda* 'read' not *yukkurito yonda* 'read slowly'.

Based on the above examples, it can be concluded that in the case of the word pairing, the noun chooses the verb and not the other way around.

Among English language learners, the teaching of word pairing has begun to receive serious attention over the past two years. [4] found that structured word pairing has helped foreign language learners to recognize, acquire, and finally use word pairing in an appropriate and acceptable way. Teaching word pairs in a structured way enhances students' understanding of word pairs and facilitates vocabulary acquisition. This affects their ability to use word pairing when speaking [22].

For native speakers, synonymous expressions are easily understood and taken for granted. Indonesians are proven to always use the term *ibu pertiwi* instead of *bunda pertiwi*, and will also use the term *dasar negara* instead of *dasar negeri*, although in principle the words *negara* and *negeri* as well as *ibu* and *bunda* have the same meaning. Foreign language learners tend to bring concepts from B1 to B2. Speaking proficiency in using correct and acceptable word pairing is one of the measures used to assess a learner's ability to use a second/foreign language. A student who is a role model for communicating in Japanese may have the perfect pronunciation and intonation of a native speaker, but when the student uses unusual word combinations, he or she may sound like a non-native speaker.

[23] reveals that foreign language learners will encounter difficulties in speaking if they do not have an understanding that every language has a regularity regarding word pairing that cannot be replaced by another word even though it has the same meaning. However, it is unfortunate that the understanding of the importance of learning word pairing is still missing among foreign language teachers. For example, in China, according to [24], foreign language textbooks in China still do not include word pairing in their discussions. The vocabulary list in foreign language textbooks is still a single-word meaning. This is the same with Japanese

language learning textbooks used in Indonesia, the vocabulary list in Japanese language learning textbooks is still a list of vocabulary with a single meaning. The lack of understanding of the term pairing words among Japanese language teachers has also been proven after researchers at the East Java Japanese Language Teachers MGMP meeting, tried to ask questions about sanding words to 50 Japanese language teaching teachers, but still, none of them recognized the term.

Word pairing as a linguistic phenomenon has several aspects that need to be identified for its use in language learning. To identify word pairing there are 2 (two) approaches revealed by [11], word pairing can be identified as 2 (two) different approaches, namely statistical approaches and phraseological or linguistic-based approaches. This opinion is reinforced by some previous research results which suggest that word pairings are identified variably. Hausmann (1989), Bahns (1993), Lehr (1996). McKeown, Radev (2000), and Evert (2004) suggested that word pairing should be seen as a linguistic expression with respect to its linguistic status so that syntactic constructions should be formed and interrelated correctly. This condition would override the contextual condition that they should only be presented in close proximity to each other. The definition below clearly states the linguistic status of word pairing is:

1) "co-occurrence of two or more lexical items as realizations of structural elements within a given syntactic pattern" [13]

2) "Word pairing is a series of two or more consecutive words, characterized by a syntactic and semantic unit whose precise and unambiguous meaning or connotation cannot be derived directly from the meaning or connotation of its components."

3) " Word pairing are expressions made up of two or more words that fit the conventional way of saying something." [14].

4) " lexically and/or pragmatically constrained repeated occurrences of at least two lexical items that are in direct syntactic relationship to each other ." [15].

As for the types of word pairing, according to the BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English) there are 8 types of grammatical and 7 types of lexical.

Grammatical word pairings consist of:

- a. G1=noun + preposition e.g. blockade against, apathy towards
- b. G2=noun + to-infinitive e.g. He was a fool to do it.
- c. G3=noun + that-clause e.g. We reached an agreement that she would join our team.
- d. G4=preposition + noun e.g. by accident, in agony
- e. G5=adjective + preposition e.g. fond of children, hungry for news
- f. G6=adjective + to-infinitive e.g. it was necessary to work, it's nice to be here
- g. G7=adjective + that-clause e.g. she was afraid that she would fail
- h. G8=different patterns in English e.g. verb + to-infinitive (they began to speak), verb + bare infinitive (we must work) and other.

Lexical word pairings:

- a. L1= verb (which means creation/action) + noun/pronoun/prepositional phrase e.g. come to an agreement, launch a missile
- b. L2= verb (which means eradication/cancellation) + noun e.g. reject an appeal, crush resistance
- c. L3= (adjective + noun) or (noun used in an attributive way + noun) e.g.
 - a. strong tea, a crushing defeat, house arrest, land reform
- d. L4= noun + verb naming the activity which is performed by a designate of this noun e.g. bombs explode, bees sting
- e. L5= quantifier + noun e.g. a swarm of bees, a piece of advice
- f. L6= adverb + adjective e.g. hopelessly addicted, sound asleep
- g. L7= verb + adverb e.g. argue heatedly, apologize humbly

Of all the types of word pairing above, we chose noun-verb word pairing as the theme of study because about 80% of all collocations in Japanese are noun-verb word pairings [15].

There is disagreement among scholars regarding the closeness of relationships and clarity of meaning between words. [13], [18], and [19] classify word combinations into three types namely free combination, word pairing, and idiom. Akimoto [25, 15], [26], and [27] also classify word combinations into three types: independent combinations, word pairings, and idioms. However, there are only two (2) word associations, word pairings and idioms, by eliminating the category of independent combinations. On the other hand, claims that there is only one side-by-side, or word pairing [28]. In this study, we use the theories of [13], [18], and [19], and use the term 1 (one) word for the term word combination consisting of free combination, word pairing, and idiom.

Research on word pairing has been conducted by many foreign language researchers although there are different terms regarding the category of word pairing as stated above. This is because word pairing plays an important role in foreign language learning. On the other hand, [29] and [4] argue that word pairing ability is an indicator of foreign language learners' ability to understand the language they are learning. Foreign language learners can be said to be competent if they have good word pairing skills. Therefore, various efforts have been made to acquire reasonable and acceptable foreign language skills. By adjusting learning strategies, methods, and activities to the level of the learner, it will be easier for students to acquire the language easily and accurately.

This study aims to reveal the types of noun-verb construction of synonyms in Japanese language learning books. In accordance with the research objectives, the method used in this study is a qualitative approach. The sources of data in this study were textbooks for teaching Japanese at the shokyuu level 'basic', namely Minna no Nihongo Shokyu I-II 2nd Edition and at the Chukyu/Jokyuu level 'middle/high', namely Minna no Nihongo Chukyuu I-II'.

The data of this study are synonyms constructed with noun-verbs found in textbooks for teaching Japanese at the 'basic' shokyuu level, namely Minna no Nihongo Shokyu I-II 2nd

Edition and at the 'middle/high' Chukyu and Jokyuu levels, namely Minna no Nihongo Chukyu. I-II

2 Discussion

According to [13], [18], [19], there are three categories of word pairings based on the closeness of the relationship between words and the clarity of meaning. The three categories of word combinations are free combination, word pairing, and idiom. Below are examples for each category of word pairing taken from the Japanese language learning books that are the source of data for this study.

1) Free combination category word pairing.

[1] 図書館へ 行って、本を 借りて、それから 友達に 会いました。

Toshokan e Itte, hon o karite, sorekara tomodachi ni aimashita.

‘going to the library, borrowing books then meeting friends’

(MNS1:136)

The third word pairs above, *toshokan e itte* 'going to the library', *hon o karite*, 'borrowing a book', *tomodachi ni aimashita* 'meeting a friend', fall into the category of free word pairs because in *toshokan e itte*, the word '*toshokan*' can be replaced freely with, for example, *tomodachi no uchi* 'friend's house'. The word go in the word pair 'go to the library' and the word "go" in the word pair 'go to the library' have the same/equivalent meaning. Likewise, the word *karite* 'borrow' in the word pair *hon o karite* is equivalent to the word *karite* 'borrow' in the word pair *CD o karimasu* 'borrow a CD'. Similarly, the word pair *tomodachi ni aimashita* 'meeting friends' is equivalent to *iro-irona hito ni aimashita* 'meeting various people'.

[2] 食事が終わったら、台所を片付けておきます。(MNS2:40)

Shokuji ga owattara, daidokoro o katazukete okimasu.

‘after finishing the meal, please clean the kitchen’

[3] 壁に鏡がかけてあります

kabe ni kagami ga kakete arimasu

'Mirror hanging on the wall'

Each word in this category of synonyms can be freely replaced with another word like the example above, *daidokoro o katazukemasu* 'kata . daidokoro 'kitchen' can be loosely coupled with the verb *katazukemasu* and the word '*daidokoro*' can be replaced with the word 'room/room'. Also in the sentence *kabe ni kagami ga kakete arimasu*, the verb '*kakete arimasu*'

which means 'to hang' can be accompanied by for example 'E' or in Japanese which means 'painting/picture',

- 2) The second category of word pairing is called Collocation. This is exemplified in the following sentence:

[1] 昨日、家へ帰る途中、雨が降られて、風がひいてしまった。

(MNC 2: 68)

Kinou, uchi he kaeru tochuu, ame ga furarete, kaze o hiiteshimatta.

'I caught a cold because it rained yesterday'

and in the sentence

[2] 来週の土曜日は、友達とバーベキューをする予定を立てています

raishuu no doyoubi wa, tomodachi to babekyuu wo suru yotei wo tateteimasu.

'making plans with friends for a barbecue party on Saturday next week'

In the two word pairs in the sentence above, *Kaze o hiku*, which means catching a cold/flu, and *yotei o tateru*, which means making plans, if Japanese learners do not understand the meaning of the words *kaze*, *hiku*, *yotei*, *tateru*, and the particle *o*, they will find it difficult to understand the word pairs in this category. Japanese students whose mother tongue is Indonesian have a tendency to pronounce *Kaze wo hairu* which in Indonesian *hairu* means to enter. As for *yotei o tateru*, it is likely to be pronounced *keikaku o tsukuru*. However, in Japanese, this expression is not acceptable.

3) A word pairing that falls into the Idiomatic category can be exemplified by *saba o yomu*, which means to give information in secret. In this category, the overall meaning of the phrase 'informing in secret' can never be derived from the meanings of the words *mackerel* "mackerel" and *yomu* "read". This type of word combination is adapted to the ideology of the target language-speaking society.

For native speakers, word pairing expressions are something that has been understood and understood by itself without difficulty (taken for granted), in other words, native speakers can speak by using word pairing appropriately without experiencing difficulties. The unequal construction of word pairs between the mother tongue and the target language is one of the difficulties of foreign language learners in the learning process. There is a tendency for foreign language learners to bring B1 concepts into B2. Speaking proficiency using correct and acceptable word pairing is one of the benchmarks in determining a learner's competence in using a second/foreign language. Structured word pairing learning is very necessary to be applied to help foreign language learners to recognize, master, and eventually be able to use word pairing properly and acceptably. Vocabulary lists in foreign language learning books are still single-word meanings. This is similar to the Japanese language learning textbooks used in

Indonesia, the vocabulary list in Japanese language learning textbooks is still a vocabulary list with a single meaning. Therefore, there is a need for structured teaching of word pairing in order to improve learners' understanding of word pairing, and increase vocabulary acquisition which ultimately affects the ability to use word pairing in speech.

Word pairing refers to things that native speakers of a language understand and comprehend without difficulty. For learners, the difference in the word order of the mother tongue and the target language is one of the difficulties in learning a foreign language. Foreign language learners tend to bring B1 concepts to B2. The ability to speak correct and acceptable word order is one measure of second/foreign language proficiency. Structured vocabulary lessons need to be implemented so that foreign language learners can recognize, acquire and eventually recognize word pairs properly and acceptably. The vocabulary of foreign language textbooks is still a list of single-meaning words, similar to Japanese textbooks used in Indonesia. That is why word pairing should be taught in a structured way so that learners' acquisition and understanding of word pairing will increase and eventually affect their ability to use word pairing in speech.

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