

Compounds and *rendaku*

I. Many compounds in Japanese undergo a process called *rendaku* (連濁)

(1) Reminder: A **compound** is a word that contains more than one root

(2) Examples of the basic *rendaku* pattern

/e/	'picture'	+	/tako/	'kite'	→	[edako]	'picture kite'
/yuu/	'hot water'	+	/too-huu/	'tofu'	→	[yuudooφuu]	'boiled tofu'
/iro/	'color'	+	/kami/	'paper'	→	[irogami]	'colored paper'
/de/	'going out'	+	/kūti/	'mouth'	→	[deguut̃çi]	'exit'
/mak-i/	'rolling'	+	/susi/	'sushi'	→	[makizuuçi]	'rolled sushi'
/mizuu/	'water'	+	/seme/	'torture'	→	[mizuzeme]	'water torture'

- Describe what happens when *rendaku* occurs. (How is the surface form of the compound different from what we would have expected, based on its parts?)

(3) What can we learn from these cases?

/hana/	'nose'	+	/ti/	'blood'	→	[hanad̃zi]	'nosebleed'
/kokoro/	'heart'	+	/tukaw-i/	'usage'	→	[kokorozukai]	'consideration'
<i>compare:</i>							
/inuu/	'dog'	+	/sin-i/	'death'	→	[inuud̃zini]	'useless death'
/mak-i/	'rolling'	+	/susi/	'sushi'	→	[makizuuçi]	'rolled sushi'

- What consequences do these forms have for the system of segmental rules in Japanese?

(4) Now consider one more complication

/tabi/	'journey'	+	/hito/	'person'	→	[tabibito]	'traveler'
/hanas-i/	'talking'	+	/heta/	'poor (at)'	→	[hanaçibeta]	'poor talker'
/ike-/	'arranging'	+	/hana/	'flower'	→	[ikebana]	'ikebana'
/suna/	'sand'	+	/hokori/	'dust'	→	[sunabokori]	'cloud of dust'
/kake-/	'covering'	+	/huton/	'futon'	→	[kakebuton]	'top futon'

- What is unexpected here?
- Does this resemble anything we have seen elsewhere?

II. There are conditions governing when *rendaku* does and does not occur

(5) A condition on the application of *rendaku*

/moraw-i/	+ /ko/	[moraigo]	/oya/	+ /ko/	[oyako]
'receiving'	'child'	'adopted child'	'parent'	'child'	'parent and child'
/yama/	+ /tera/	[yamadera]	/yama/	+ /tera/	[yamatera]
'mountain'	'temple'	'mountain temple'	'mountain'	'temple'	'mtn. and temple'

- Is this condition phonological? Why or why not?

(6) A point to note: *Rendaku* generally affects only “native” morphemes, not Sino-Japanese or foreign morphemes

- Do apparent exceptions to this pattern suggest that morphemes can change which lexical stratum they belong to?

(7) A phonological condition on the application of *rendaku*: “Lyman's Law”

/kami/	'deity'	+ /kaze/	'wind'	→	[kamikaze]	'divine wind'
/mono/	'thing'	+ /sizuuka/	'quiet'	→	[monoçizuuka]	'tranquil'
/siro-/	'white'	+ /tabi/	'J. socks'	→	[çirotabi]	'white <i>tabi</i> '
/maru-/	'round'	+ /hadaka/	'naked'	→	[maruhadaka]	'completely naked'
/tai-kutu/	'boredom'	+ /sinog-i/	'endurance'	→	[taikutsuçinogi]	'killing time'

- What's different phonologically about these examples, that might account for why *rendaku* is blocked? Note the following minimally different examples:

/nuri-/	'lacquer'	+ /huta/	'lid'	→	[nuri <u>b</u> uta]	'lacquered lid'
/nuri-/	'lacquer'	+ /huda/	'sign'	→	[nuri <u>ç</u> uda]	'lacquered sign'
/o-haraw-i/	'purification'	+ /kusi/	'comb'	→	[oharai <u>ç</u> uçi]	'purification comb'
/o-haraw-i/	'purification'	+ /kuzi/	'ticket'	→	[oharai <u>k</u> udzi]	'purification ticket'

(8) Given the data in (7), why are these next examples interesting?

/kuzu/	'rubbish'	+ /kago/	'basket'	→	[kuz <u>ç</u> ukago]	'wastebasket'
					*[kuz <u>ç</u> ukago]	
/geta/	'clogs'	+ /hako/	'box'	→	[getabako]	'shoe cupboard'
					*[ketabako], *[getahako]	

III. Some more-complex compounds

(9) What accounts for this difference?

/nuuri/ + /hasi/ + /hako/

‘lacquer’ ‘chopstick’ ‘box’

→ [nuuribaçibako] ‘box for lacquered chopsticks’

→ [nuurihaçibako] ‘chopstick box which is lacquered’

(10) Can the same explanation be given here?

/nise/ + /sakura/ + /matuuri/

‘fake’ ‘cherry-blossom’ ‘festival’

→ [nisezaku^ˆramatsu^ˆuri] ‘festival for fake cherry blossoms’

→ [nisesaku^ˆramatsu^ˆuri] ‘fake festival for cherry blossoms’

- Some linguists actually argue that it can — that rendaku *applies* in /sakura/ + /matuuri/. (We will not pursue this further here, but it’s an interesting idea.)

For more about rendaku:

Itô, Junko, and R. Armin Mester. 1986. The phonology of voicing in Japanese: Theoretical consequences for morphological accessibility. *Linguistic Inquiry* 17: 49-73.

Irwin, Mark. 2009. Prosodic size and rendaku immunity. *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 18: 179-196.