

# Comparative Studies on Compound Verbs in Japanese and Korean —On the Possibility of the Existence of Aspectual Compound Verbs in Korean—

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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore differences between Japanese and Korean in the word formation of compound verbs. Although Japanese and Korean are morphologically classified as ‘agglutinating’ type languages, Japanese has a significantly productive word formation system of compound verbs while compound verbs in Korean are not productive. This contrast causes Korean learners of Japanese to find the Japanese compound verb system quite difficult. This comparative research also contributes to the Japanese language pedagogy for Korean learners. This paper presents differences and similarities between compound verbs in Japanese and Korean. It focuses in particular on Aspectual Compound Verbs proposed by Kageyama(2013) and shows that Korean also has the Aspectual Compound Verb Type and suggests the reclassification of Korean compound verbs.

## 2. The classification of compound verbs in Japanese and Korean

According to Kageyama(2013), compound verbs in Japanese are classified as follows:

### 2.1. The classification of compound verbs in Japanese

There are three types of Compound Verb V1V2 in Japanese.

#### I. Syntactic Compound Verb Type:

Syntactically V1 is an objective clause of V2:

- (1) “V1+ V2 hajimeru (start)”: start to V1
- (2) “V1+ V2 tsuzukeru (continue)”: continue to V1
- (3) “V1+ V2 owaru/oeru (finish)”: finish V1-ing

#### II. Lexical Compound Verb Type:

##### II-I. Thematic Relation Compound Verb Type:

Semantically in (4) V1 is a way or means for V2, in (5) V1 is a causal action which causes its resultative state V2, in (6) V1 and V2 occur simultaneously and in (7) V1 occurs while V2 is continued:

- (4) “oshi(push)+ akeru(open)”

- (5) “aruki(walk)+ tsukareru(be tired)”  
 (6) [LCS1]AND[LCS2] naki (cry) +sakebu(shout)  
 (7) [LCS2]WHILE[LCS1] asobi (play/ enjoy) +kurasu (live)

## II - II . Aspectual Compound Verb Type:

V2 obtains an aspectual meaning through grammaticalization:

- (8) “shinji(believe)+ KOMU (INTO)” (believe (a false fact), will not change one’s idea)  
 (9) “kaki(write)+ DASU (OUT)” (start to write, inchoative aspect)  
 (10) “kaki(write)+ AGERU(UP)” (accomplish writing, perfective aspect)

Furthermore, there is a subsidiary(auxiliary) verb type including SHIMAU, MIRU, AGERU, KURERU, etc. They compound with the TE form of V1 as in the following examples.

- (11) wasure (forget) + TE + SHIMAU  
 (12) tameshi (try) +TE + MIRU

Syntactic Compound Verb Type and Aspectual Compound Verb Type are very productive. Therefore, Japanese has various types and a large volume of compound verbs. On the other hand, it seems quite difficult in Korean to form verbs belonging to the Syntactic Compound Verb Type or Aspectual Compound Verb Type. The Korean lexicon only allows the Thematic Relation Compound Verb Type. Tsukamoto(2014:31) also says “Compound Verbs in Korean seldom display linguistic phenomena related to V1.” The thing that functions like V2 of Syntactic Compound Verbs and Aspectual Compound Verbs in Japanese is the Subsidiary(auxiliary) Verb in Korean. However, we can find a somewhat different type of Subsidiary Verb from typical Subsidiary Verbs. There is possibility that these are Aspectual Compound Verb Type. We will discuss this in section 3. The following table 1 summarizes the above descriptions.

**Table 1. Comparative table of Compound Verb and Subsidiary Verb in both languages.**

	Syntactic Compound Verb	Lexical Compound Verb		Subsidiary Verb
		Thematic Relation Compound Verb	Aspectual Compound Verb	
Japanese	○	○	○	○
Korean	×	○	× → ?	○

### 3. Possibility of the existence of Aspectual Compound Verbs in Korean

#### 3.1. Features of Aspectual Compound Verbs in Japanese

Kageyama(2013, 14) says that Lexical Aspect is a concept to describe not only temporal

aspect such as “perfective or imperfective”, but also the unfolding of events more widely and it includes the strength or extent(degree) of events that the verb describes(one-time, multiple-times, repetition, emphasis, reduction, concentricity, interaction, etc). The following table 2 shows features of Aspectual Compound Verbs.

**Table 2. Features of Aspectual Compound Verbs (Kageyama 2013)**

	Aspectual Compound Verb
Semantic relation between V1 and V2	V2 modifies and complements V1
Determination of argument relation (case relation)	V1 is the head
Limitation of selecting subject and object	V1 is the head
Tightness of internal structure	Relatively loose
Hierarchy of the structure	Located above the Thematic Relation Compound Verb
Transitivity harmony principle	Does not apply in most cases
Shift from transitive verb to intransitive verb	Systematic shift based on regular productivity

The following verbs are V2 of Aspectual Compound Verbs which has lost independence in Japanese: *yamu*, *ageru*, *agaru*, *tsumeru*, *tsumaru*, *sasu*, *chigaeru*, *shiburu*, *nayamu*, *chigau*, *hateru*, *kiru*, *kaeru*, *tsuku*, etc. Japanese has many kinds of Aspectual Compound Verb like this. On the other hand, as mentioned above, Korean doesn't have such a type of verb, and the same function is carried out by Subsidiary Verbs. However, there is a somewhat different type from typical Subsidiary Verbs among verbs classified as Subsidiary Verbs. Because the following verbs can be compounded with only a few verbs and have low productivity, they are different from typical subsidiary verbs: *-nata* (come out (repetition-emphasis)), *-nayta* (put out (overcome-complete)), *-tulta* (enter(emphasis)), *-ppacita* (fall (emphasis)), *-chiwuta* (put away (aggressiveness-complete)), *-mekta* (eat (emphasis)) . So they seem to function rather as aspectual compound verbs.

### 3.2. Korean subsidiary verbs and Aspectual Compound Verbs

In regard to the range of subsidiary verbs there are various claims by researchers and the lists that they present are also different. In this paper we present the next 16 verbs as subsidiary verbs. However, we will deal only with the type connected by the inflectional affix “-a/e” (There are other connecting patterns besides -a/e, but this pattern is the most general one).

(13) Korean subsidiary verbs

①가다 (kata<sup>1</sup>/go) ②오다 (ota/come) ③보다 (pota/watch(intentions)) ④버리다 (pelita/throw away(complete)) ⑤놓다 (nohta/put(intentions)) ⑥두다 (twuta/put(intentions)) ⑦주다 (cwuta/give(benefactives)) ⑧드리다 (tulita/give(benefactives)) ⑨대다 (tayta/touch(repetition-emphasis)) ⑩쌓다 (ssahta/stack(repetition-emphasis)) ⑪나다 (nata/come out(repetition-emphasis)) ⑫내다 (nayta/put out(overcome-complete)) ⑬들다 (tulita/enter(emphasis)) ⑭빠지다 (ppacita/fall(emphasis)) ⑮치우다 (chiwuta/put away(aggressiveness-complete)) ⑯먹다 (mekta/eat(emphasis))

①~⑦, ⑨, ⑫ are common to the seven previous works<sup>2</sup> being classified as subsidiary verbs, but in regard to the other verbs opinions differ as to whether they are subsidiary verbs or not. In this paper we set the range of subsidiary verbs widely to conduct a test. First, we added ⑧ which is a humble form of ⑦ and expresses benefactives, and then classified ①~⑧ into group A, the "typical subsidiary verb", ⑨, ⑫ were classified into group B, "having a high possibility of being an Aspectual Compound Verb" because of semantic similarities. Table 3 shows details of the grouping for the test.

**Table 3. Details of the grouping for the test**

Typical Subsidiary Verb (Group A)	High possibility of being an Aspectual Compound Verb(Group B)
① kata ② ota ③ pota ④ pelita	⑨ tayta ⑩ ssahta ⑪ nata ⑫ nayta
⑤ nohta ⑥ twuta ⑦ cwuta ⑧ tulita	⑬ tulta ⑭ ppacita ⑮ chiwuta ⑯ mekta

⑨~⑯ of group B, which were classified as having a high possibility of being Aspectual Compound Verbs, when used in a sense removed from their original meaning, have developed within spoken language and can express "strength and extent(one-time, multiple-time, repetition, emphasis, reduction, concentricity, interaction, etc)" and sometimes include a negative connotation.

Korean subsidiary verbs which are similar to "syntactic compound verbs" are distinguished from "Aspectual Compound Verbs" by whether or not V1 can combine with grammatical elements(passive, causative, "noun + hata (do)", etc.). Therefore, one test method is to see whether or not V1 can combine with an alternative expression such as "kuleta (do so)". This is because such tests are effective in confirming the productivity of the compound verb, In the next section we will compare and contrast "group A" with "group B" by using a variety of methods for testing connectivity and productivity of V1 and V2 including this method.

### 3.3. Test

The test adopts the following five methods.

Test I : whether or not V1 can be replaced by 그러다 (kuleta / do so).

In test I , Group A can be replaced in all cases, but this was often impossible in group B. ⑨ ⑩ were exceptions.

(14) Group A ① kulay kata ② kulay ota ③ kulay pota ④ kulay pelita ⑤ kulay nohta  
⑥ kulay twuta ⑦ kulay cwuta ⑧ kulay tulita

(15) Group B ⑨ kulay tayta ⑩ kulay ssahta ⑪ \* kulay nata ⑫ \* kulay nayta ⑬ \* kulay tulta  
⑭ \* kulay ppacita ⑮ \* kulay chiwuta ⑯ \* kulay mekta

Test II : Whether or not V2 can be combined with [noun + hata (do)] verb.

Test II also produced a similar result to test I .

(16) Group A ① sengcanghay kata (grow) ② palcenhay ota (develop)  
③ cosahay pota (investigate) ④ kyelhonhay pelita (marry)  
⑤ phocanghay nohta (package) ⑥ cechanghay twuta (store)  
⑦ centalhay cwuta (transfer) ⑧ yenlakhay tulita (contact)

(17) Group B ⑨ cosahay tayta (investigate) ⑩ yenlakhay ssahta (contact)  
⑪ \* sengcanghay nata (grow) ⑫ \* innayhay nayta (endure)  
⑬ \* kamsohay tulta (decrease) ⑭ \* pwuphayhay ppacita (rot)  
⑮ \* phanmayhay chiwuta (sell) ⑯ \* phanmayhay mekta (sell)

Test III : Whether or not V1 and V2 can be combined with the focus particles ( 만 (mam/only), 도 (to/also), or 은 / 는 (un/nun-topic indicator)).

Subsidiary Verbs have a high dependency on the main verb and tend not to part with the main verb, but it is sometimes possible for a focus particle to add a special meaning. " 만 (mam/only), 도 (to/also), 은 / 는 (un/nun-topic indicator)" can be put between V1 and V2. This is a test to confirm the degree of binding between the verbs. The result of this test is that there is a low acceptability of " 도 (to/also)" on the whole, Group A had a higher acceptability than group B, but ④ was the exception. On the other hand, in group B ⑨⑩⑫ were the exceptions, but " 만 (mam/only)" had a higher acceptability on the whole.

- (18) Group A ① talma-man / \* to / nun kata (resemble) ② pwule-man / \* to / nun ota (blow)  
 ③ meke-man / to / nun pota (eat) ④ ule- \* man / \* to / \* nun pelita (cry)  
 ⑤ khye-man / \* to / nun nohta (turn on) ⑥ salma-man / \* to / nun twuta (boil)  
 ⑦ capa-man / to / nun cwuta (catch) ⑧ capa-man / to / nun tulita (catch)

- (19) Group B ⑨ ttetule-man / \* to / nun tayta (be noisy) ⑩ ule-man / \* to / nun ssahta (cry)  
 ⑪ nola-man / \* to / \* nun nata (play) ⑫ ikye-man / \* to / nun nayta (win)  
 ⑬ cule-man / \* to / \* nun tulta (decrease) ⑭ sseke- \* man / \* to / \* nun ppacita  
 (rot)  
 ⑮ phala- \* man / \* to / \* nun chiwuta (sell) ⑯ ice- \* man / \* to / \* nun mekta  
 (forget)

Test IV : whether or not the same verb can be used continuously .

The fact that the same verb is used continuously is evidence to show that it has the structure "main verb + Subsidiary Verb". The results of the test show that four verbs in group A and one verb in group B can be used in this way.

- (20) Group A ③ 봐 보다 (pwa pota / try looking) ④ 버려 버리다 (peleye pelita /throw away)  
 ⑤ 놓아 놓다 (noha nohta / leave or put) ⑥ 뒤 두다 (twe twuta / keep)  
 (21) Group B ⑩ 쌓아 쌓다 (gained by picking → stack and stack)

Test V : Whether or not the verb can appear redundantly after the main verb.

The Subsidiary Verb can appear redundantly after the main verb (this phenomenon is known as reiteration). 7 verbs in the group A and one verb in the group B passed the test.

- (22) Group A ③ 해 놓아 보다 (hay noha pota /try doing something in advance) ④ 해 놓아  
 버리다 (hay noha pelita /do something accidentally) ⑤ 해 뒤 놓다 (hay twe  
 nohta /do something in advance intentionally) ⑥ 해 놔 두다 (hay nwa twuta /do  
 something in advance intentionally) ⑦ 해 놔 주다 (hay nwa cuta /do something  
 in advance for someone) ⑧ 해 놔 드리다 (hay nwa tulita /do something in  
 advance for someone) ...

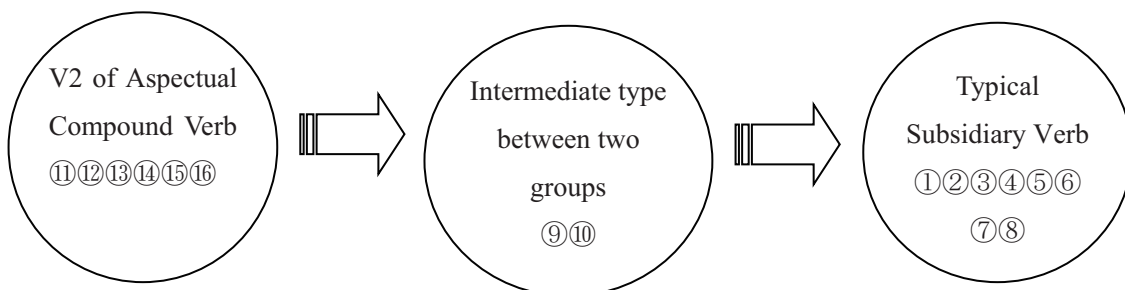
- (23) Group B ⑩ 해 대 쌓다 (hay tay ssahta/do something repeatedly)

The following Table 4 is a summary of the above.

**Table 4. Results of the test**

	Group A	Group B
Test I “그려다 (kuleta/do so)”	○	×(exceptions : ⑨⑩)
Test II “noun + hata(do)” verb	○	×(exceptions : ⑨⑩)
Test III focus particle	○(exception : ④)	△(exceptions : ⑨⑩⑫)
Test IV continuous use of the same verb	△(possible with four verbs)	×(exception : ⑩)
Test V reiteration after the main verb	△(six verbs are applicable)	×(exception : ⑩)

The five test items above are Subsidiary Verb-specific features. The results show “Group A” which were classified as typical Subsidiary Verb passes almost all the tests. On the other hand “Group B” did not pass most of the tests. This means that “Group B” is less productive and has weaker morphological binding than “Group A”. However, ⑨ and ⑩, which had been classified as “Group B”, show similar features to a typical Subsidiary Verb, but their semantic characteristics are close to “Group B” with the aspectual meaning of “emphasis”. Therefore we can consider them to be located in between the two groups. “Group B” passes almost the tests for Aspectual Compound Verbs in Japanese in Table 2, whilst having the meaning of “strength and extent” as an Aspectual feature. Furthermore, Group B verbs show different features from typical subsidiary verbs. Thus they have a high possibility of belong to the “Aspectual Compound Verb” group. These results can be shown in figure 1 below. The arrow in Figure 1 is to indicate the degree of shifting to the Subsidiary Verb(grammaticalization).

**Figure 1. Re-classification of the conventional Subsidiary Verbs in Korean**

#### 4. Conclusion and future challenges

We have overviewed the classification and features of compound verbs in Japanese and Korean. Furthermore, focusing on the “Aspectual Compound Verb” which is said to be a

unique feature of Japanese not yet observed in other languages, we conducted tests to confirm whether or not Aspectual Compound Verbs exist in Korean. As a result, we found that some of the verbs that have been classified as conventional Subsidiary Verbs show features close to Aspectual Compound Verbs in Japanese. However, there are still inadequacies in the verification method, and it can be said that a future challenge is to seek a more objective and easy-to-understand method of verification. In addition, this paper has been focused on observing the whole picture of the compound verbs in both languages. Thus, more detailed comparison and analysis from a finer perspective about each individual compound verb in both languages are required.

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## Notes

### 1. Yale Romanization:

Vowels: ㅏ [a], ㅑ [ya], ㅓ [e], ㅕ [ye], ㅗ [o], ㅛ [yo], ㅜ [wu], ㅠ [yu], ㅡ [u], ㅣ [i], ㅞ [ay], ㅟ [yay], ㅠ [ey], ㅡ [yey], ㅢ [wa], ㅣ [way], ㅤ [oy], ㅥ [we], ㅦ [wey], ㅧ [wi], ㅨ [uy]

Consonants: ㄱ [k], ㄲ [kk], ㄴ [n], ㄷ [t], ㄸ [tt], ㄹ [l], ㅁ [m], ㅂ [p], ㅃ [pp], ㅅ [s], ㅆ [ss], ㅇ [ng], ㅈ [c], ㅉ [cc], ㅊ [ch], ㅋ [kh], ㅌ [th], ㅍ [ph], ㅎ [h]

### 2. Choy(1937), I(1976), Yu(1980), Ko(1993), Se(1996), Son(1996), Phak(2005)