

## ■ Derivation

**Derivation** refers to word structure in which a subordinate form, i.e., affix, connects to the core part (base), as in *tanoshi + sa* ‘enjoyability’. Japanese affixes may be either prefixes or suffixes.

A prefix is a dependent morpheme that is attached at the “head” of a word. Some of the examples are *go/ō-* (honorific marker), *ō-* ‘large’, *ma-* ‘true, pure’, *ka-* (emphatic), *mu-* ‘non’, and *fu-* ‘in-, un-’. They tend not to change the part of the speech of the word, as in *yowai* ‘weak’ (adjective) → *ka-yowai* ‘feeble’ (adjective). One must be careful, however, with *fu-* and *mu-*. Look at the form, *mu+kanshin* ‘indifference’, for instance. *Kanshin* ‘concern’ is a noun, but *mu+kanshin*, with *mu-* added, is the stem of the *na*-adjective, *mukanshin na* ‘indifferent’.

A suffix is a dependent morpheme that is attached at the end of the word stem. Quantifying particles such as *-ko*, *-kai*, *-tsu*, *-bai*, other expressions that follow numbers such as *-koro*, *-miman*, markers used to express respect attached to names such as *-sama*, *-kun*, and plural markers such as *-tachi* and *-ra*, are some of the examples of suffixes. Two or more suffixes may be combined as in *san-nin sama zutsu* ‘in groups of 3 people-honorific’.

Suffixes tend to change the part of speech of the word. *Tanoshii* ‘pleasurable’ is an adjective, but when the suffix *-sa* is attached to the adjectival stem, *tanoshisa* ‘pleasure’ becomes a noun.

When *-garu* is attached, the verb *tanosigaru* ‘to enjoy oneself’. *Sekai* ‘world’ is a noun, and *sekai-teki* ‘global’ becomes the stem for the nominal adjective *sekaiteki na* ‘global’.

Derivation includes grammatical derivation and lexical derivation. *Samu+sa* ‘coldness’, *shiro+sa* ‘whiteness’, and *Tarō-yō* ‘for Taro’s use’ are examples where combinations are basically unrestricted (**grammatical derivation**). *\*Ka + usui* ‘thin’, *\*atsu* ‘hot-weather’ + *-mi* are not possible because of the constraint imposed by the stem (**lexical derivation**).

One also must be aware of how tightly linked the constituents are in word formation. Take, for example, prefixes of negation. There is no pause in the utterance after *fu-*, and *mi-*, but there can be a slight pause after *hi-*. Morphologically as well, when *hi-* occurs with another prefix of negation, *hi-* is placed outside the rest of the word, such as *hi-mitōrokusha* ‘non-unregistered person’. Also, *hi-* can negate an entire compound, as in *hi-saishoku shugisha* ‘non-vegetarian person’. Thus, when a word has a suffix, such as *-teki* ‘having the characteristic of’, and when one needs to negate the entire word, *hi-* is the prefix of choice, as in *hi-kensetsu-teki* ‘non-constructive’. (If one is to negate only the verb, *mi-kensetsu* ‘not yet built’ is possible.)

Derivation also differs with types of words such as *kango* (words of Chinese origin) and *wago* (words of Japanese origin). For example, the prefix *o-* (honorific marker) in principle cannot be used with loan words, as in *\*o-pan* ‘bread’. (*O-biiru* ‘beer’ is an exception.) This prefix is pronounced [go] when attached to a *kango* (of Chinese pronunciation), as in *go-shisoku* ‘your son’ and [o] in front of a *wago* (in Japanese pronunciation), as in *o-kosama* ‘your child’. (*O-tanjōbi* ‘your birthday’ is an exception.) In general, affixes of Chinese origin, such as *mu-*, *fu-*, and *-teki*, are used with *kango*, as in *mu-ishiki* ‘sub/unconscious’, *fu-kanō* ‘impossible’, and *jindō-teki* ‘humanitarian’.

In relation to orthography, how to pronounce the affixes written out in kanji is a problem. If one pronounces the 中 as *-chū* in 水槽中 *suisō-chū*, the suffix signifies somewhere in the domain (‘inside the water tank’). If one pronounces it *-jū*, the suffix signifies the entire area of the water tank (‘throughout the water tank’). (This distinction does not always exist, however, as in 今週中, *konshū-chū/konshū-jū* ‘within this week’.) The suffix 人 is pronounced *-nin* as a counter, *-nin* as the agent of an action (e.g., 代理人 *dairinin* ‘representative’), and *-jin* when signifying the affiliation or attribute of the person (e.g., 外国人 *gaikokujin* ‘foreigner’).

→語構成 word formation (2-B), 派生語 derivatives (3-C), 接頭辞 prefix, (接頭語 prefix word) (3-C), 接尾辞 suffix, (接尾語 suffix word) (3-C)

## ● References

Kageyama, Taro (1993) *Bunpō to go-keisei* [Grammar and Generation of Word]. Hituzi Syobo.

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