Use of The Verb-te YARI-MORAI
(Linguistic Typology)

Lien Darlina [1]*, Wahyuning Dyah[2]
Politeknik Negeri Bali, Politeknik Negeri Bali
*darlina@pnb.ac.id

Abstract

The aim of this study is, firstly, to examine the basic sentence patterns of the Japanese Verb-te YARI–MORAI from a linguistic typological perspective. Secondly, to describe the formation process and usage of the Verb-te YARI–MORAI constructions, namely V-te agemasu which forms the 'me-kan' affix, V-te moraimasu which forms the 'di-kan' affix, and V-te kuremasu which also forms the 'me-kan' affix. The method employed is a qualitative descriptive approach of an explanatory and synchronic nature, focusing on the exposition of the language system both individually and in terms of universal linguistic tendencies. The research findings indicate that the use of the Verb-te YARI–MORAI verbs is relatively easy for learners to understand. During the presentation process, learners were able to distinguish the usage of these three verbs fluently, achieving optimal results. Furthermore, learners were also able to identify the differences between Verb-te agemasu and Verb-te kuremasu, which, although both meaning 'to give', possess distinctive nuances unique to the Japanese language. In addition, the Verb-te YARI–MORAI construction is very commonly used in everyday communication by Japanese speakers, particularly in the context of tourism Japanese.

Keywords: *Yari-Morai Verbs, Linguistic Typology, Tourism Japanese*

1. Introduction

An understanding of the yari-morai verbs—namely, ageru 'to give', kureru 'to give', and morau 'to receive'—is one of the fundamental aspects of learning Japanese as a foreign language. These three verbs have relatively complex functions and nuances of meaning as they are closely linked to social relations, hierarchy, and the subject's point of view in speech acts (Sutedi, 2023). Their correct usage requires not only a command of grammatical aspects but also an understanding of the accompanying pragmatic context and cultural background. Although all three are used to express the actions of giving and receiving, 'ageru', 'kureru' and 'morau' differ in terms of the subject, object and point of view employed (Sutedi, 2020; Tjandra, 2013). Therefore, the choice of the appropriate verb is largely determined by who acts as the giver, who acts as the receiver, and who is the focal point of the sentence.

This study is a continuation of a previous study which specifically examined the use of the verbs agemasu, kuremasu and moraimasu in Japanese, which carry the basic meanings of 'giving' and 'receiving'. Unlike previous research, the focus of the current study is directed towards the function of these three verbs as auxiliary verbs (hojodoushi), as proposed by Dedi (2020), which play a role in forming specific grammatical constructions, particularly in the -te verb pattern. In this context, the main verb undergoes a process of grammaticalisation when followed by 'agemasu', 'kuremasu' or 'moraimasu', there by producing a more complex benefactive nuance of meaning. For example, the verb 'kakimasu', meaning 'to write', can change form to 'kaite agemasu', which means 'to write down (for someone else)', implying the transfer of the action from the subject to another party. Furthermore, the form 'kaite moraimasu' conveys the meaning 'written' (by someone else for the subject's benefit), indicating that the subject receives a benefit. Meanwhile, *kaite kuremasu* also means 'to write down (for me or my group)', but with an emphasis on the recipient's perspective, who feels they are benefiting from the action. Thus, the use of these three auxiliary verbs is not only related to grammatical aspects, but also reflects social relationships, the speaker's perspective, and pragmatic nuances in Japanese communication.

This paper focuses specifically on an initial discussion of the overall research plan that has been devised, with a primary focus on the analysis of the usage of Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te moraimasu, and Verb-te kuremasu in the Japanese language. These three forms are examined as part of grammatical constructions that indicate the relationship between the agent and the recipient of an action, each carrying a distinct semantic meaning: Verb-te agemasu conveys the meaning of the 'me-kan' affix, Verb-te moraimasu conveys the meaning of the 'di-kan' affix, and Verb-te kuremasu also conveys the meaning of the 'me-kan' affix. The choice of this topic is based on its relevance in the classroom teaching context, given that these three forms constitute essential material in basic-level Japanese language learning. In addition to their theoretical value in grammatical studies, the use of these three forms often presents practical difficulties for learners, particularly in understanding the differences in meaning, perspective and context of their usage. These difficulties frequently arise because, although they can generally be translated similarly into Indonesian, each form has distinct grammatical nuances, thus requiring a deeper understanding to ensure their correct usage.

In addition to examining the use of Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te moraimasu and Verb-te kuremasu, this study also includes a discussion of sentence structures that utilise these three forms as part of the linguistic analysis. This study is relevant because the target learners are students on vocational programmes in the field of tourism, who require a more practical, straightforward and easily understandable approach to learning. Therefore, the presentation of material on these three verbs needs to be adapted to the students' level of understanding, so

that they not only master the basic concepts but are also able to apply them appropriately in various communicative situations, both in an academic context and in the world of tourism.

Based on the background outlined above, there are two main issues that form the focus of this study. The first issue relates to how sentence structures in Japanese are constructed using the forms Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te moraimasu, and Verb-te kuremasu. Analysis of this issue was carried out using Typological Linguistics to examine the structural patterns and semantic relationships formed within these constructions. The second issue concerns how the use of these three forms can be effectively applied in the context of Japanese language learning for vocational students in the tourism sector. The analysis was carried out using a discourse analysis approach to examine the extent to which Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te moraimasu and Verb-te kuremasu can be understood and used appropriately by learners, particularly in meeting practical communication needs in the workplace. Furthermore, this study also covers the design of learning strategies that are more communicative, straightforward and contextual, so as to suit the characteristics and needs of vocational students.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method (Artawa, Jufrizal: 2018; Sudaryanto, 2015) of an explanatory and synchronic nature, with the aim of explaining linguistic phenomena both at the level of a single language and within the framework of linguistic universals. The approach used is combined with discourse analysis as a basis for understanding the data contextually. The theory used to discuss the basic sentence structure of the Japanese language is Typological Linguistics (Artawa, Jufrizal: 2018). This method was chosen as it was deemed the most appropriate for an in-depth examination of the usage of the constructions Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te moraimasu and Verb-te kuremasu, each of which possesses a distinctive grammatical meaning: Verb-te agemasu carries the meaning of the affix 'me-kan', Verb-te moraimasu, which carries the meaning of the affix 'di-kan', and Verb-te kuremasu, which also carries the meaning of the affix 'me-kan' (for me). Although these three forms are generally associated with the acts of giving and receiving, each has fundamental differences in sentence structure and semantic function, particularly in the identification of the subject as the agent of the action, the object as the recipient, and the speaker's perspective, which influences the choice of the appropriate form. Therefore, through a discourse analysis approach, this study aims to reveal how these three constructions are actually used in language practice, so that they can be understood not only from a structural perspective, but also in the context of their use by learners of Japanese.

3. The Use of Verb-te YARI-MORAI

As outlined in the background section, this paper focuses its analysis on two main aspects. Firstly, the basic sentence structure of the Japanese language that utilises the constructions Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te moraimasu, and Verb-te kuremasu as part of a grammatical system indicating action relations. Secondly, the usage of these three constructions is examined from a semantic perspective, namely Verb-te agemasu, which contains the meaning of the 'me-kan' affix, Verb-te moraimasu, which carries the meaning of the 'di-kan' affix, and Verb-te kuremasu, which also carries the meaning of the 'me-kan' affix (for me), so that they can be understood more comprehensively in terms of both form and usage within a communicative context.

A. The basic sentence structure Verb-te YARI-MORAI, namely Verb-te agemasu 'to give', Verb-te moraimasu 'to receive' 'to be given', and Verb-te kuremasu 'to give' (for me)

In Japanese grammar, verbs play a fundamental role in sentence formation. Verbs not only serve to express actions or states, but also form the core that determines the overall sentence structure (Sanada, 1999). The presence of a verb influences the arrangement of other elements in the sentence and determines its meaning and grammatical correctness. This differs from Indonesian and English, which generally place the subject as the main and obligatory element in a sentence. Conversely, in Japanese, the subject does not always have to be stated explicitly. Indeed, even a sentence consisting of just a single verb can be considered complete, as its meaning can be understood from the context.

By way of illustration, the sentence 「勉強する。」(benkyou suru), which means 'to study', is considered a complete sentence in Japanese, even though it does not explicitly state a subject. In Japanese, the verb functions as the main or central element of a sentence, as it determines the form, meaning and grammatical correctness of an utterance. According to Tjandra (2013), a sentence in Japanese can be considered complete simply by the presence of a verb, even if the subject is not explicitly stated. In such situations, the subject is usually inferred from the context, for example, as 'I'. This demonstrates that Japanese places greater emphasis on the function of the verb as the main element in sentence formation than on the explicit presence of the subject. Consequently, a sentence can still convey meaning clearly even if the agent of the action is not directly mentioned.

In the following discussion, the verbs analysed are kaite agemasu, kaite moraimasu and kaite kuremasu. These three verbs are compound verbs formed by combining the Verb-te form of the verb kaku 'to write'—namely, kaite—with the auxiliary verbs agemasu, moraimasu and kuremasu. This combination produces a construction that expresses the relationship of giving and receiving an action in Japanese.
The explanation is as follows:

1) kaite agemasu

kaite agemasu.
to write down
denwa bangou o kaite agemasu.
to write down a telephone
Dewi san ni denwa bangou o kaite agemasu.
writing down the telephone number for Dewi
Alisan wa Dewisan ni denwa bangou o kaite agemasu.
Alisan is writing down the telephone number for Dewi.

.
. The structure of the basic Japanese sentence in the example above can be explained as follows: the first constituent is the verb 'kaite agemasu', which functions as the main predicate. This is followed by the object 'denwa bangou' ('telephone number'), marked by the particle 'o' as the object marker. Next comes the target constituent 'Dewi-san', marked by the particle 'ni', which means 'to'. Finally, the sentence is completed by the agent of the action, namely 'Ali-san', marked by the particle 'wa'.

S

2) kaite moraimasu

kaite moraimasu.
is written down
denwa bangou o kaite moraimasu
the telephone number is written down
Alisan ni denwa bangou o kaite moraimau.
the telephone number is written down by Ali
Dewisan wa Ali san ni denwa bangou kaite moraimasu.
Dewi's telephone number is written down by Ali

The structure of the basic Japanese sentence in the example above can be broken down as follows. The first constituent is the verb 'kaite moraimasu', which functions as the main predicate. Next, this predicate is complemented by the object 'denwa bangou' ('telephone number'), marked by the particle 'o' as the object marker. Following this is the constituent indicating the source of the action, namely 'Ali-san', marked by the particle 'ni', meaning 'by'. Finally, the sentence is completed by the constituent 'Dewi-san', marked by the particle 'wa' as the topic marker in the sentence.

3) kaite kuremasu

kaite kuremasu.
to write down
denwa bangou o kaite kuremasu.
to write down the telephone number
watashi ni denwa bangou o kaite kuremasu.
write down the telephone number for me
Dewisan wa watashi ni denwa bangou o kaite kuremasu.
Dewisan writes down the telephone number for me.

The structure of the basic Japanese sentence in the example above can be explained as follows: the first constituent is the verb 'kaite kuremasu', which functions as the main predicate. This is followed by the object 'denwa bangou' ('telephone number'), marked by the particle 'o' as the object marker. Next comes the target constituent 'watashi', marked by the particle 'ni', which means 'to'. Finally, the sentence is completed by the agent of the action, namely 'Dewi-san', marked by the particle 'wa'.

B. The use of Verb-te YARI-MORAI, namely Verb-te agemasu 'to give', Verb-te moraimasu 'to receive' 'di-kan', and V-te kuremasu 'to give' (for me)

The Japanese language has distinctive grammatical patterns for expressing actions performed for the benefit of others through the Verb-te YARI-MORAI constructions, namely Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te moraimasu and Verb-te kuremasu. According to Sutedi (2023), the use of these forms not only expresses an action but also reflects social relationships, the direction of the benefit provided, and the speaker's perspective on an event. In terms of meaning, Verb-te agemasu and Verb-te kuremasu can be equated with the meaning of the affix 'me-kan', i.e. performing an action for someone else, whilst Verb-te moraimasu conveys the meaning of 'di-kan', i.e. receiving a benefit from an action performed by someone else. Therefore, the use of the Verb-te YARI-MORAI construction is determined not only by the lexical meaning

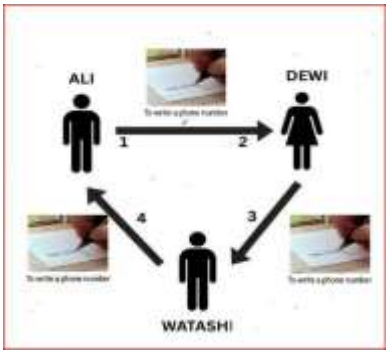
of the verb, but also by the relationship between the agent of the action, the recipient of the benefit, and the perspective adopted by the speaker in conveying the information.

Verb-te agemasu is used when the subject performs an action for the benefit of another person. In Indonesian, this construction generally conveys the meaning of 'to do something for someone', for example kaite agemasu (書いてあげます), which means 'to write for someone'. Conversely, Verb-te kuremasu is used when someone performs an action that benefits the speaker or a member of their in-group, so that the action is viewed from the perspective of the beneficiary. This construction can also be translated with the meaning of 'me-kan', for example, 'kaite kuremasu' (書いてくれます), which means 'to write for me'. Meanwhile, 'Verb-te moraimasu' is used to express that the speaker or their group receives a benefit from an action performed by someone else. In Indonesian, this construction generally conveys the meaning of 'di-kan', for example, 'kaite moraimasu' (書いてもらいます), which means 'to have it written by someone else'.

The use of the Verb-te YARI-MORAI construction is not only determined by the meaning of the verb, but is also influenced by the social relationship between the agent and the beneficiary. Consequently, its usage is closely linked to the concept of politeness (keigo) in the Japanese language. Speakers must take into account social status, the closeness of the relationship, and the perspective adopted, so that the choice between the forms Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te kuremasu, or Verb-te moraimasu is appropriate to the communicative context and does not lead to misunderstandings.

For learners of Japanese as a foreign language, particularly Indonesian speakers, the use of the Verb-te YARI-MORAI constructions is often one of the most difficult topics to grasp. This difficulty arises because Indonesian lacks a grammatical system that directly distinguishes the direction of benefit and the speaker's perspective, as is the case in Japanese. Therefore, an understanding of the function, meaning and contextual use of 'Verb-te agemasu', 'Verb-te kuremasu' and 'Verb-te moraimasu' must be mastered so that learners are able to communicate accurately in accordance with Japanese linguistic and cultural norms.

To clarify the differences in function and the intended recipient of the benefit in these three constructions, the following illustrates the use of Verb-te agemasu (me-kan), Verb-te moraimasu (di-kan), and Verb-te kuremasu (me-kan for 'I').



1. Ali san wa Dewi san ni denwa bangou o kaite agemasu.
   Alisan is writing down the telephone number for Dewi.
2. Dewi san wa Ali san ni denwa bangou o kaite moraimasu.
   Dewi's telephone number is written down by Ali
3. Dewi san wa **watashi ni** boorupen o kaite **kuremasu**.
   Dewisan writes down the telephone number for me.
4. Watashi wa Ali san ni denwa bangou o kaite agemasu
   I'll write down the phone number for Ali-san

The illustration in the image above helps learners of Japanese to more easily understand the usage of the Verb-te YARI-MORAI constructions, namely Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te moraimasu and Verb-te kuremasu. The illustration uses arrows to indicate the direction of the beneficiary of an action, enabling learners to recognise the relationship between the agent, the beneficiary, and the perspective used in each construction.

S

Consequently, the functional differences between each form can be understood more clearly and systematically.

In the first illustration (1), Ali writes down the telephone number for Dewi, so the construction 'kaite agemasu' (書いてあげます) is used, as the speaker is performing an action that benefits another person. In the second illustration (2), Dewi states that she benefits from Ali's action, so the construction 'kaite moraimasu' (書いてもらいます) is used, indicating that Dewi receives assistance in the form of the action of writing down the telephone number. Furthermore, in the third illustration (3), Dewi writes down the telephone number for me (watashi), so the construction 'kaite kuremasu' (書いてくれます) is used, as the action benefits the speaker. As for the fourth illustration (4), I write down the telephone number for Ali, so the construction 'kaite agemasu' (書いてあげます) is used again, as the speaker is performing the action for the benefit of another person. Through these illustrations, learners can understand that the difference in the usage of 'Verb-te agemasu', 'Verb-te moraimasu' and 'Verb-te kuremasu' does not lie in the type of action performed, but rather in the direction of the benefit provided and the speaker's perspective. Therefore, the use of visual aids such as arrows can help learners distinguish the functions of each Verb-te YARI-MORAI construction, making it easier for them to apply them correctly in Japanese communication.

4. Discussion

This study examines the use of the compound verbs Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te moraimasu and Verb-te kuremasu as benefactive expressions in the Japanese language. Unlike the basic forms agemasu, moraimasu and kuremasu, which express the transfer of objects, the Verb-te forms express the giving or receiving of actions, services or assistance that provide a benefit to a specific party. These three forms not only indicate the type of action performed, but also the direction of benefit transfer and the speaker's perspective. For example, the verb 'kakimasu' ('to write') can form 'kaite agemasu' ('to write for someone else'), 'kaite moraimasu' ('to receive help in having something written'), and 'kaite kuremasu' ('to write for me'), each of which reflects a difference in the direction of benefit and the speaker's perspective. Syntactically, benefactive constructions involve a giver, a recipient and an action, with the particle 'ni' marking the recipient or giver of the benefit depending on the type of construction, 'ni' marking the source or giver of the benefit under certain conditions, and 'o' marking the object. Therefore, the use of the verbs Verb-te agemasu, Verb-te moraimasu and Verb-te kuremasu depends not only on grammatical rules, but also on social relationships, the direction of benefit transfer, and the speaker's perspective in Japanese communication.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the discussion, it can be concluded that an understanding of the use of the benefactive construction 'Verb-te agemasu', Verb-te moraimasu, and Verb-te kuremasu in Japanese can be effectively improved through two stages of learning: firstly, understanding the basic sentence structure that encompasses the relationship between the benefactor, the beneficiary, and the direction of benefit transfer; and secondly, utilising visual aids such as images or diagrams illustrating the relationships between characters to clarify the speaker's perspective. This approach has been applied in Japanese language teaching to university students and training participants by asking them to create visual illustrations based on the patterns studied, whilst maintaining the element 'watashi' as a reference point in the use of 'Verb-te kuremasu'. This strategy has proven to help learners understand the function, direction of benefit transfer, and the speaker's perspective in the use of the Benefactive Construction in a more concrete and practical manner.

6. Daftar Referensi/Reference (Font: Times New Roman; Ukuran: 14)

Artawa, I. K., & Jufrizal. (2018). *Tipologi linguistik: Konsep dasar dan aplikasinya*. Denpasar, Indonesia: Pustaka Larasan.

Dixon, R. M. W. (2010). *Basic linguistic theory* (Vol. 2). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Kaiser, S., Ichikawa, Y., Kobayashi, N., & Yamamoto, H. (2013). *Japanese: A comprehensive grammar* (2nd ed.). London, England: Routledge.

Koizumi, T. (1993). *Nihongogaku nyūmon*. Tokyo, Japan: Taishūkan Shoten.

Makino, S., & Tsutsui, M. (1989). *A dictionary of basic Japanese grammar*. Tokyo, Japan: The Japan Times.

Sanada, S. (1999). *Nihongo bunpō gaisetsu*. Tokyo, Japan: Kuroshio Shuppan.

Sudaryanto. (2015). *Metode dan aneka teknik analisis bahasa*. Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Duta Wacana Press.

Sutedi, D. (2020). *Verba bahasa Jepang*. Bandung, Indonesia: Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia.

Sutedi, D. (2023). *Keigo bahasa Jepang*. Bandung, Indonesia: Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia.

Tjandra, S. N. (2013). *Sintaksis Jepang*. Jakarta, Indonesia: Widia Inovasi Nusantara.