Analysis of *Koto* in Reading Materials for Japanese Language Teaching

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The purpose of this study is to analyze the examples of *koto* occurring in reading materials extracted from *shinsho* to find out what *koto* expressions are used and if there are any tendencies in the contexts in which *koto* is used, compared with Kisaka's(1988) analysis of novels.

The following two points are the focus of this study.

1) What *koto* expressions are used in shinsho and what is their frequency?

2) In what sentence patterns does *koto* appear and how many times does each sentence pattern using *koto* occur?

The materials for analysis are the beginning parts of eight texts, which are reading materials developed by Suzuki(1998a) . The total number of letters of those materials is approximately 67,000.

This research consists of two studies. In the first study, I listed all the examples of *koto* found in the eight texts, classified them according to their form and meaning or function, counted them, and determined the frequency of appearance. Then I extracted the *koto*-structures, which should be taught as a pattern and were used with high frequency, and analyzed them. In the second study, I classified the examples of *koto* extracted from the eight texts into 7 kinds according to Kisaka's(1988) classification of six kinds and twelve patterns.

As a result of my study, the following tendencies were observed.

1) The total number of the examples of *koto* was 361. Classifying them, koto was not used often as a noun with the substantial meaning of koto (2 examples) ,but rather, was used much more frequently as a pseudo-noun (359). Among pseudo-nouns, koto was used most frequently as either a noun with a nominalizing function(111) or an expression including koto which should be taught as a pattern, that is, a koto-structure (193).

2) The number of different kinds of the *koto*-structures extracted from the eight texts was 34. Among them, one structure, *koto*-ga-dekiru, appeared in

seven texts and three structures, sentence+*to-iu-koto* (contents), *koto-ni-suru* (decision), and -*ru-koto-ga-aru/nai*, appeared in six texts. The *koto*-structures occurring with highest frequency were noun-*no-koto*, noun/sentence+*to-iu-koto*, *koto-ga-dekiru*, *koto-ni-suru*, *koto*-ni-naru, -*ta-koto-ga-aru*, -*ru-koto-ga-aru*, and *koto-daroo*.

3) Concerning sentence patterns, "~*koto-wo* +verb (V)", "~*koto-ga* +V", and " ~ *koto-ga-aru /nai*" showed high rates of usage in this order in Kisaka's(1988) analysis of novels, while in this study of shinsho texts, "~ *koto-da/daroo* " showed the highest rate of usage, followed by "~*koto-ga* +V" and "~*koto-ni* +V".

4) In novels "~*koto-wo* +V", denoting an intentional and subjective expression, was more frequent than " ~ *koto-ga* +V", representing a spontaneous and natural expression; on the other hand, in shinsho texts the latter occurred more frequently than the former.

5) In the text in which the author explained and interpreted "working" based on his experience (ronsetsu bun, or interpretive wrinting style) and the text in which the author explained about honorifics with spoken language (explanatory writing style), "~ *koto-ga* +V" occurred infrequently. On the other hand, in the text in which the author developed a theory based on scientific grounds (scientific writing style) and another in which the author described one specific matter (descriptive writing style), the structures "~ *koto-ga* +V" and "~ *koto-da/daroo*" occurred frequently.

6) *Koto* occurred in one in 2 sentences in *Tate-shakai-no-ningen-kankee*, which had the highest frequency of *koto*, and was used in one in 6.2 sentences in *Keigo-wo-tsukaikonasu*, which had the lowest frequency of *koto*. However, the range of the frequency of use of *koto* in *shinsho* was not as great as that in novels.

7) In this study, three texts which showed a low frequency of *koto* use were written in explanatory, interpretive and descriptive writing styles, while the remaining five texts, with a much higher frequency of *koto* use, were in scientific writing style.

8) *Tate-shakai-no-ningen-kankee* and *Ringi-to-nemawashi* showed a high frequency of *koto* use and their average sentence length was long. *Keigo-wo-tsukaikonasu* showed a low frequency of *koto* use and its average sentence length was short. Accordingly, a relationship is inferred between the use of *koto* and the average length of sentence. (ICU, Japanese Language Program)