

You should become familiar with both Contemporary Linguistic and Traditional/Pedagogical Terminology:

Words can be categorized in terms of *semantics* (= relating to word meaning) or in terms of *syntax* (= relative word order and the connections thereof). Syntax and semantics are not entirely independent, but it doesn't really help to use semantics as a means of categorizing for syntax. Adjectives are supposed to be "words that describe" -- but then again, so are many nouns and even verbs. A noun may be a "person, place or thing" if you define "thing" to include a lot of things that are not 'things' (is a dream a thing?), and there are many words referring to an "action or state of being" that are not verbs (is purgatory not a state of being?). Nothing about 'meaning' explains why the negative of ある (a verb) is ない (an adjective), or about why so many nouns also appear as verbs or adjectives (勉強、赤).

So why do people still use hideously non-functional definitions such as "noun = person, place, or thing" -- which hopelessly attempt to use semantic categories to define syntactic categories (noun, adjective, verb)? Consider it a relic of an old and frustrated educational system. The public educational system in Japan has its own old and frustrated pedagogical grammar, which likewise conflates syntax and semantics: consider the words keiyōshi 形容詞 = i-adjectives; dōshi 動詞 = verbs; and keiyō-dōshi 形容動詞 which are neither adjectives nor verbs (they are basically nouns, but with two minor caveats). Nevertheless, the dictionary industry in Japan has grown around the traditional framework.

The following is a list of categories, using the basic framework used by most linguists, followed by the subcategories identified in Japanese pedagogical terminology, followed by examples:

Note also: Japanese is known as a "head-final" language. That means that each full sentence is pulled together syntactically at the very end. Regular sentences end in either of the three main word categories (N, A, V), often capped by a sentence-final particle. Phrases within sentences are also head-final.

**Nouns** (def: can be followed by ~だ/~だった/~じゃない/~じゃなかった)

名詞 (めいし) = ordinary nouns (use の)

山、学校、病気

代名詞 (だいめいし) = demonstratives (use の)

これ、あなた

形容動詞 (けいようどうし) = 'na-adjectives'; usually cannot themselves be modified

しずか、りっぱ、げんき、きれい

接尾語 (せつびご) = suffixes

田中さま、子供たち、赤さ、あまみ、さむけ

助数詞 (じょすうし) 、 = counting suffixes (one type of suffix)

一台、一本、一枚、一匹、一頭、一羽、一尾

副詞 (ふくし) : 'adverbials' (these are fickle in terms of how they connect)

すこし、まったく、決して、しっかり

堂々 (どうどう) (takes と、たる) = a vestigial/classical expression

如何 (いか) 、はるか (takes に、なる) = vestigial/classical expression

Note also:

同じ本、同じだ (which shows that おなじ is a noun that takes の)

私も同じく、東京に行く。(which shows that おなじく also functions vestigially as an adverb)

Nevertheless, J. dictionaries classify おなじ as 形容詞シク and even 形容動詞 (see below)

**Adjectives** (def: ending in ~い/~かった/~く/etc.; but cannot take ~だ)

形容詞 (けいようし)

赤い、大きい、美しい、...

**Verbs** (def: can have ~ます/~ました endings, etc.)

動詞 (どうし) = verbs

読む、行く、食べる、見る、...

## Verb subcategories based on verb-endings:

五段動詞 (ごだんどうし) : 書く、洗う、学ぶ、死ぬ、いらっしゃる、…

上一段動詞 (かみいちだん…) : 着る、見る、おちる、おきる、…

下一段動詞 (かみにだん…) : きえる、ねる、とめる、…

カ変動詞 (かへんどうし) : 来る

サ変動詞 (さへんどうし) : する

Note: contrast with *Jorden/Genki* typology of ~u vs ~ru vs ~aru, which is simpler:

わかる→わかります but いらっしゃる→いらっしゃいます (both 'godan')

かく→かいて but いく→いって (neither system accounts for the difference)

あらう→あらって but とう→とうて (neither system accounts for the difference)

## Verb subcategories based on transitivity:

自動詞 (じどうし = intransitive v.) ドアが開く、ドアがしまる

他動詞 (たどうし = transitive v.) 人がドアを開ける、人がドアをしめる

## Some other Word (or partial-word) Categories:

助動詞 (じょどうし) = Auxiliaries (a grab-bag of verb-end and sentence-end tidbits)

です、せる、させる、れる、られる、まい、よう、だ、そうだ、

連体詞 (れんたいし) = Pre-nominal words that require a following noun:

いわゆる、あらゆる、この、わが、さる

接続詞 (せつぞくし) = Pre-sentential words that are otherwise syntactically independent:

そして、しかし、だから、すると、かつ、あるいは、

感動詞 (かんだうし) Exclamatory words, that are otherwise syntactically independent:

ああ、おや、まあ、はい、いいえ、もしもし、

## 助詞 (じょし) = Particles:

格助詞 (かくじょし) = Case particles:

が、に、を、で、 $\emptyset$ 、

係助詞 (けいじょし/かかりじょし) = Contrastive particles:

は、も、 $\emptyset$ 、すら、さえ、しか、でも、ぞ、こそ、

終助詞 (しゅうじょし/おわりじょし) = Post-sentential particles:

か、よ、ね、ねえ、な、ぞ、ぜ、さ、

間投助詞 (かんとうじょし) = Post-phrase particles:

ね、な、さ、

助詞 (じょし) = Other, loosely bound particles:

から、まで、より、ほど、

副助詞 (ふくじょし) = Assistant assorted miscellaneous... (huh?)

さえ、まで、ばかり、だけ、ほど、くらい、など、なんか、やら、ずつ、だに、のみ、…

(one gets the feeling the pedagogists were out of ideas when they got to this)