Morphophonemic Analysis in Children's Language (*Youjigo*) in *The Gakuen Babysitters Manga* (Vol. 1-3)

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ABSTRACT: This research discusses word formation in children's language variety (*youjigo*) in the *Gakuen Babysitters manga (Volumes 1-3)* through a morphophonemic review. The study aims to describe the word formation and morphophonemic processes in the children's language variety. Tsujimura's theory and Suzuki's theory are applied. The descriptive qualitative method is used with data sourced from conversations of toddler characters. Data were collected using the listen closely and take notes method and classified by morphophonemic processes. Results show 12 findings of *youjigo* words, primarily formed through borrowing. The morphophonemic process includes phoneme release (2), phoneme abbreviation (2), phoneme change (4), phoneme addition (2), and phoneme fusion (2), with no phoneme shift observed.

Keywords: youjigo, morphological, morphophonemic, phoneme

INTRODUCTION

As in studying Indonesian grammar, Japanese also has various language variations(Barus & Pujiono, 2022). Within these language variations, there are classifications of language based on the age of the speakers (King, 2020) In the classification of language varieties based on age, there are categories such as you go, or children's language, Shingo or what is commonly known as wakamono kotoba (slang) or youth language; and roujingo or the language of the elderly. (Sudjianto; & Dahidi, 2007). Prior research has explored these variations extensively, especially focusing on the developmental aspects of youjigo as children adapt phonetic structures to their linguistic capabilities (Kawahara & Kumagai, 2019). Previous research has extensively discussed language variations, such as using slang in Japanese. According to Ogura (2007) & Asano (2022) (Barus & Pujiono, 2022)Children's language, or youjigo, is used in their early language development stages.

As is the case with the Indonesian grammatical system, the Japanese language also exhibits a variety of language forms (Siregar, 2021)These variations can be further classified according to the age of the speakers (Moro-Velazquez, Gomez-Garcia, Arias-Londoño, Dehak, & Godino-Llorente, 2021)This classification of language forms according to age comprises the following categories: '*youjigo*', or child language; '*shingo*', commonly known as '*wakamono kotoba*' (*youth slang*); and '*roujingo*', or elder language (Sudjianto; & Dahidi, 2007). A substantial body of research has been dedicated

to examining linguistic variations, focusing on using slang in Japanese(Nakane et al., 2022). *Youjigo* as the language children use during the initial stages of their linguistic development (Ogura, 2007). Recent research by Tanaka (2020) has advanced this discussion by exploring how these variations influence cross-generational communication and cultural identity in contemporary Japan, providing a fresher perspective on the enduring impact of linguistic evolution.

Linguistic variability in Japanese also extends interactionally, with deferential language known as 'keigo' employed across different social contexts and ages, profoundly impacting social discourse (Nakane et al., 2022); Aoki, 2020). Recent studies continue to explore the dynamic nature of Japanese language use among different generations. For instance, by (Tanaka, 2020) highlights the evolving nature of 'wakamono kotoba', noting the influence of global culture and digital communication. Further, a (Nakase et al., 2021) research by Kobayashi examines the digital adaptation of 'roujingo,' demonstrating how older generations integrate technology into their communication practices (Nakase et al., 2021).This ongoing research illustrates the adaptability and fluidity of the Japanese language across different ages and social contexts.

According Chaer (2003, p. 212) & (Saxton, 2010) explains that children learn language from another individual to communicate effectively. This process begins when the child can still not produce language, starting with the production of sounds, which then evolve into words. In language development, children not only produce new sounds that develop into words, but they also tend to modify the sounds commonly spoken by adults, adapting them into their language. This happens because the sounds children hear from adults are processed and adjusted to their speech capabilities, resulting in a structure that is not yet fully developed as a complete word. Therefore, children have a language variety with a structure that differs from that of adults.

As Chaer (2003, p. 212) & (Tomasello & Carpenter, 2019) observes that children acquire the capacity to communicate effectively through interactions with others. This process commences even before children can articulate language, as they produce sounds that subsequently evolve into words. During their linguistic development, children do not produce novel sounds that subsequently become words; they also tend to modify the sounds typically uttered by adults, adapting them into their linguistic forms. This phenomenon occurs because children process the sounds they hear from adults and adapt them according to their linguistic capabilities. As a result, the structures produced are not yet fully mature, as they are not yet complete words. Consequently, children develop their language variations, which exhibit structural differences from those of adults.

The word formation or morphemic process occurring in the Gakuen Babysitters manga Volume 1-3 findings are analyzed using Tsuujimura's theory. (Tsujimura, 2000, pp. 148–154), which divides the morphological process into five methods:

     a. Affixation
     b. Reduplication
     c. Compounding
     d. Clipping
     e. Borrowing

In the morphology of the Japanese language, the components of words or morphemes are categorized using the terms "content morphemes" (*naiyou keitaiso*/内容形態素) and "function morphemes" (*kinou keitaiso*/機能形態素) (Sutedi, 2011, p. 45).

The Morphophonological or morphophonemic processes are branches of linguistics that focus on the study of morphemes that arise due to the influence of phonemic factors or grammatical factors, which trigger phoneme changes due to morphological processes. Suzuki (cited in Hidayah, 2018), divides these phoneme changes in the morphophonemic process into six types, namely :

(1) Phoneme Elision (*on in datsuraku*/音韻脱落). This elision process can occur when a base morpheme or affix is omitted during the process of phoneme combination (Kridalaksana, 2007, p. 195). In Japanese, this phenomenon is called *on in datsuraku*「音韻脱落」where 'on in' means phoneme and 'datsuraku' means omission/falling out/tumbling out (Matsura Kenji, 1994, pp. 137, 768),

(2) Phoneme Contraction (*on in shukuyaku*/音韻縮約). Phoneme contraction is a process where the shortening of phonemic sounds occurs due to the abbreviation or economization in pronouncing a word. This shortening is known as contraction. In Japanese, the term for phoneme contraction is on *in shukuyaku*「音韻縮約」where 'on in' means phoneme and 'shukuyaku' means shortening/contracting (Matsura Kenji, 1994).

(3) Phoneme Alternation (*on in koutai*/音韻交替). The process of phoneme alternation involves the change of a phoneme as a result of a morphological process. This occurs during the combination of base morphemes, where the final consonant phoneme of the first syllable is combined with the initial vowel phoneme of the second syllable (Kridalaksana, 2007). The term for phoneme alternation in Japanese is called 'on in koutai.' 'On in' means phoneme, and 'koutai' means change/replacement (Matsura Kenji, 1994).

(4) Phoneme Shift (*on in tenkan*/音韻転換). The shift in phoneme position occurs when components of the base morpheme and parts of affixes combine to form a single syllable. Shifts can happen at the beginning, middle, or end, or through segmentation. A backward shift occurs in base morphemes that end in a consonant followed by a suffix or a final component of a confix that begins with a vowel, resulting in the consonant becoming part of the subsequent syllable (Nasution, 2017). In Japanese, this process is referred to as 'on in tenkan' (音韻転換), where 'on in' means phoneme and 'tenkan' signifies transition or exchange (Matsura Kenji, 1994).

(5) Phoneme Addition (*on in tenka*/音韻添加) The addition of phonemes in Japanese is referred to as 'on in tenka/音韻添加,' which means the insertion or addition of a phoneme. Following its Japanese terminology, this change process is called 'on in tenka.' 'On in' means phoneme, and 'tenka' means addition (Matsura Kenji, 1994).

(6) Phoneme Fusion (on in *yuugou*/音韻融合). In Japanese, it is called on in *yuugou,* which means the fusion or merging of phonemes. Here, 'on in' means phoneme, and '*yuugou*' refers to combination/fusion (Matsura Kenji, 1994). In this context, the morphophonemic processes examined in this research focus on the language used by children, particularly toddlers. Children under five still face challenges pronouncing phonemes due to their incomplete articulation

functions, which are still based on their developmental stage. This means that their pronunciation is influenced by the filtering level of the sounds they produce.

In the early stages of language acquisition, children find learning and remembering nouns easier. Along with the acquisition of vocabulary, children also experience development in their grammatical systems, in line with their respective mother tongues. Subsequently, their abilities increase, and they begin to enrich their verb vocabulary (Ogura, 2007).

Sendi Nagari (2018) analyzed the types and morphophonemic formations in *Wakamono Kotoba*. The study's results revealed 58 morphophonemic changes in the formation of *Wakamono Kotoba* within the used data set. Out of these 58 data points, we identified 14 instances of phoneme release, 8 instances of phoneme shortening, 7 instances of phoneme change, and 29 instances of phoneme melting. Meanwhile, the two types of Morphophonemics, namely phoneme shifts and additions, are absent. Another study, according to Anisa Purwanti (2019), found that six processes occur in the formation of words in various *Youjigo* languages. These processes include adding a suffix, repetition, shortening, addition, merging, and borrowing. One word acquisition called performance is when the children acquire the language from their environment. Words used by adults when communicating with children contain a polite form, using onomatopoeia and reduplication. Because of this, the children use the same form but tend to make mistakes by not using particles or having pronunciation errors. Elka Madina (2023) identified ten phonological processes in various children's languages, including *Onsetsu no shouryaku, Gotoushiin no shouryaku, Gochuushiin no shouryaku, Douka, Koukougaion no zenhouka, Koukougaion ka, Haretsuon ka, Hasatsuon ka, Ryuuon no watari on ka, dan Hibion ka.* The most common *Hasatsuon ka* phonological process is related to acquiring the phonology of consonant sounds in Japanese. Toddler characters under 3 have mastered vowel sounds, diphthongs, double consonants, and almost all consonants. However, they have not accurately mastered consonant clusters, fragile, affricate, and liqueid sounds. This shows that children's language skills develop with body growth.

Children's language also exhibits differences or uniqueness. Their articulatory systems are still developing, leading to frequent pronunciation errors. The following is an example of the phenomenon found by the author.

> きりん: あたちはくまちゅかきりん。
>
> Kirin: **Atachi** *wa* **kumachuka** *kirin.*
>
> 'Kirin: **I'm Kumatsuka** Kirin
>
> (Kumatsuka kirin, 学園ベビーシッターズVol.1)

The original form of あたち 'atachi' is あたし 'atashi,' which means 'I,' as well as the word くまちゅか '*kumachuka,*' which comes from くまつか '*kumatsuka.*' Both of these words undergo morphophonological changes. The word changes involve borrowing and morphophonological phoneme alteration.

The following are the phoneme changes:

/a/ /t/ /a/ **/s/ /h/** /i/   /k/ /u/ /m/ /a/ **/t/ /s/** /u/
                    ↓   ↓
/k/ /a/

/a/ /t/ /a/ **/c/ /h/** /i/   /k/ /u/ /m/ /a/ **/c/ /h/**

/u/ /k/ /a/ In the explanation above, it can be seen that there is a change in form in both

morphemes *'atashi'*
and *'kumatsuka'* due to the alteration of the consonant phonemes /s/ and /h/ into the consonant phonemes /c/ and /h/ in the word *'atashi.'* The next change is the alteration of the consonant phonemes /t/ and /s/ into the consonant phonemes /c/ and /h/.

Based on the findings, it can be observed that children tend to imitate the sounds produced by adults and then reproduce them by adjusting the structure to what they can articulate. These changes are further classified through a morphophonemic analysis. This research aims to examine word formation and sound changes within the *youjigo* language variety through a morphophonemic study. The study is limited to and focuses on the word formation process in children's language, specifically used by toddler characters in the *Gakuen Babysitters manga*, volumes 1-3.

Based on these references, previous studies have examined children's language varieties in linguistic studies within the fields of morphology and phonology separately. In contrast, this study aims to analyze you through a morphophonemic lens to investigate the influence of phonological processes or grammatical factors that contribute to the emergence of phonemes resulting from morphological processes, whether information or changes in morphemes."

METHOD

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive research is a type of study that can reveal and describe various phenomena in society in a concrete and detailed manner. (Sukmadinata, 2017, p. 72). Descriptive research aims to provide an objective depiction of specific phenomena, offering information about social conditions, such as describing certain characteristics of a research sample (Purba & Simanjuntak, 2011, p. 19). According to Sugiyono, the qualitative method is a research approach grounded in post-positivism philosophy, used to study specific conditions of an object without manipulation. The researcher acts as the primary instrument, employing a combination of data collection techniques, inductive/qualitative data analysis, and emphasizing meaning over generalization in the research results (Dewi, Fauzah, & Ayasmin, 2022).

This study collected data through attentive reading and library research, employing observation and note-taking techniques to identify instances of youjigo language. The data collection steps included: carefully observing and reading the data sources, recording potential youjigo examples into a database, identifying and analyzing each instance, explaining changes in youjigo words or phrases, classifying them based on morphological and morphophonemic processes, and organizing them into a table according to their transformations. The data collection employed in this study was conducted through note-taking and library research techniques. Concerning the methods of data collection, Mahsun (2007, p. 92) posits that the observation method is a fundamental technique that shares similarities with the recording technique, as the observation process involves capturing information through monitoring. This perspective reaffirms Mahsun's (2007) assertion that observation is a key methodological approach in research settings (Hawkins & Hastie, 2021).

The data source used in this study is a Japanese manga or comic titled *Gakuen Baby Sitters*, starting from volume 1 to volume 3, or the international version of the comic School Baby Sitters by Hari Tokeino (2010). The data is in the form of words spoken by the children's characters in the Gakuen Baby Sitters manga (学園ベビーシターズ) starting from volume 1 to volume 3.

To ensure data validity, this study employed triangulation by comparing data across multiple volumes and referencing relevant language studies(Natow, 2020). At the same time, reliability was maintained through consistent data collection techniques and peer review to verify interpretations and classifications. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, which involves data reduction by filtering youjigo examples according to the research focus, and conclusion drawing to interpret findings, particularly regarding morphophonemic changes in Japanese youjigo (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014;)Johnson & Lee, 2020). This approach emphasizes meaning over generalization, making it suitable for qualitatively investigating language phenomena in manga.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the study's findings on the morphophonemic processes in children's language varieties, specifically *youjigo*, used in the *Gakuen Babysitters manga*. The analysis focuses on the morphological and phonological changes observed in the language used by toddler characters. By employing a descriptive qualitative method, the study identifies the types of word formations and the phonemic alterations resulting from these processes. The results highlight the unique characteristics of children's language, reflecting their developmental stage and the influence of adult speech patterns. The discussion further contextualizes these findings within existing literature, exploring their implications for understanding language acquisition and development in young children.

Table 1

Number of Data	Data	Volume	Morphophonemic Process	Morphological Process
1	ごめね **Gome** ne **Sorry**	1	Phoneme release *(On In Datsuraku)*	Word shortening
2	こたろん **Kotaron** **Kotaro** (Person's name)	1	Phoneme elision *(On In Datsuraku)*	Word shortening
3	なっ **Na'** **bored**	1	Phoneme abbreviation *(On In Shukuyaku)*	Word shortening
4	ちゃ~ **cha**— **Older bother**	1	Phoneme abbreviation *(On In Shukuyaku)*	Word shortening

5	ちとまっ **chitoma'** **Staying overnight**	1	Phoneme change *(On In Koutai)*	Borrowing
6	しまんま**shimanma** zebra	2	Phoneme change *(On In Koutai)*	Borrowing
7	ちょっくぐらい **Chokku** **A little**	3	Phoneme change *(On In Koutai)*	Borrowing
8	おねんねちてまちた **Onenne chitemachita!** **hard to sleep**	3	Phoneme change *(On In Koutai)*	Reduplication and borrowing
9	おじいしゃん! **Ojiishan**! **Grandfather!**	1	Phoneme addition *(On In Tenka)*	Borrowing
10	ほんもにょ **hon monyo** **Real**	2	Phoneme Addition *(On In Tenka)*	Borrowing
11	かっけー **kakke-** **Cool**	2	Phoneme fusion *(On In Yuugou)*	Borrowing
12	ないでねー **naidene-** I am not crying!	2	Phoneme fusion *(On In Yuugou)*	Borrowing
	Total data			12

Phoneme elision *(On In Datsuraku)*

1. Data (1)
子達 ：ごめね
Kotachi : **Gome** *ne*
: **Sorry**

(Tokeino, 2010)(anak-anak, *Gakuen Babysitters* Vol.1)

In the data above, the original form of the word ごめ 'gome' is ごめん 'gomen', followed by the suffix ね 'ne', which in this context means 'sorry' or 'pardon' (Matsuura: 224). The context depicted in the manga involves a female student named Inomata, who usually has a firm attitude but is shown crying in front of children. Upon witnessing this, the children immediately surround Inomata, assuming she is crying because of something they did. As a result, the children collectively say ごめね 'gome ne'. If we observe the morphological changes, the word undergoes truncation or shortening due to omitting one phoneme, specifically the consonant 'n' in 'gomen'. As noted in

Hidayah's (2018) study, the morphophonemic process occurring here is phoneme elision, where the consonant phoneme /n/ is removed, leading to the transformation of the word ごめんね 'gomen ne' into ごめね 'gomene'.

The following phoneme is commited:

Gomen ne   :/g/ /o/ /m/ /e/ /n/ /n/ e/

Gomene   : /g/ /o/ /m/ /e/   /n/ e/

As shown in the explanation above, the word 'gomen ne' undergoes a morphophonemic process by omitting the consonant phoneme /n/.

2.   Data (2)
   たか   : やだっ、おれもこたろんちとまっ
   Taka   : *Yada', ore mo **kotaron** chitoma'*
          : No, I will stay over with ***kotarou***

                              (Tokeino, 2010)(Kamitani Taka, Gakuen Babysitters Vol.1)

In the data above, the original form of the word こたろん "kotaron" is こたろさん "Kotaro san," which refers to a person's name. In Japanese, the suffix さん "san" is added to names as an important part of etiquette, aimed at showing respect to others. If we look at the change in the word, the morphological process that occurs is word truncation or shortening, where phonemes are omitted, resulting in a shorter form. The phonemes /s/ and /a/ are omitted in this case. As noted in Hidayah's (2018) study, the morphophonemic process is phoneme omission, where in the word こたろさん "Kotaro san," the phonemes /s/ and /a/ are dropped.

   Here are the omitted phonemes:

Kotarousan   :/k/ /o/ /t/ /a/ /r/ /o/ /s/ /a/ /n/

Kotaro   :/k/ /o/ /t/ /a/ /r/ /o/   /n/

From the explanation above, it can be seen that the word "Kotarousan" undergoes a morphophonemic process, with the consonant phoneme /s/ and the vowel phoneme /a/omitted.

Phoneme abbreviation *(On In Shukukuyaku)*
3.   Data (3)
   こたろう : なっ
   Kotaru   : ***Na'***
          : ***bosan***
                              (Tokeino, 2010)(Kashima Kotaraou, Gakuen Babysitters Vol. 1)

In the data above, the base form of the word なっ"na" is つまらない"*tsumaranai*," which, when translated into Indonesian, means "boring/uninteresting" (Matsuura: 1119). The context of the word refers to Kotarou being left alone by his older brother Ryuu, who was invited to play by other children. Kotarou felt that his brother might be playing with Taka and the others for a long time. At that moment, Kotarou said the word なっ "na" as an expression that he was starting to feel bored waiting for his brother to finish playing, and then he took a picture book. The word つまらない "*tsumaranai*" underwent a morphological process of truncation or word shortening, so the word was reduced to just なっ "na."

As noted in Hidayah's (2018) study, here are the phonemes that were omitted:

Tsumaranai : /t/ /s/ /u/ /m/ /a/ /r/ /a/ /n/ /a/ /i/

The explanation above shows that the morpheme "tsumaranai" omits many phonemes when a toddler speaks. The omitted phonemes include the consonant phoneme /t/, consonant phoneme /s/, vowel phoneme /u/, consonant phoneme /m/, vowel phoneme /a/, consonant phoneme /r/, and vowel phoneme /i/.

4. Data (4)
    こたろう：ちゃ~りゅうにいちゃっ
    Kotaru : ***cha-****ryuunicha*
    : **Brother**, brother Ryuu

(Tokeino, 2010)(Kashima Kotarou, Gakuen Baby sitters Vol.1)

In the data above, the base word of the term ちゃ~ 'cha-' is おにいさん 'oniisan,' which in this context means 'older brother.' The word 'oniisan' undergoes a morphophonemic process of phoneme change, where the consonant phoneme /s/ changes to the consonant phoneme /c/ and

/h/, transforming into the word おにちゃん '*oniichan*.' Then, this word undergoes another transformation, specifically shortening, as Kotarou further shortens the word. In this conversation, Kotarou is crying and calling out to his older brother Ryuu with the word ちゃ~ '*cha-*,' intending to call his brother to him. The word 'oniisan,' which transformed into '*oniichan*,' is shortened to 'cha-.'
The morphophonemic process that occurs in this word is not only one but involves two changes, namely a phoneme change and phoneme shortening. The following phonemes are omitted:

Oniichan : /o/ /n/ /i/ /i/ /c/ /h/ /a/ /n/

As explained above, the morpheme 'oniichan' omits most of its phonemes when pronounced by a child in the toddler category. The phonemes omitted include the vowel phoneme /o/, the consonant phoneme /n/, the vowel phoneme /i/, and the consonant phoneme /n/.

Phoneme Change *(On In Koutai)*

5.　Data (5)

たか　　：やだっ、おれもこたろんちとまっ

Taka　　　: *Yada', ore mo kotaro n* **chitoma'**

　　　　　: No, I will **stay over** with kotarou

(Tokeino, 2010)(Kamitani Taka, Gakuen Babysitters Vol. 1)

In the data above, 'kotaron chi toma' means 'kotaro san to tomaru.' The morpheme that undergoes phoneme alteration is 'to,' which changes to 'chi.' The morphemes 'kotaron' and 'toma' have been discussed in data analysis points 2 and 3, concerning data numbers 4 and 5. The word 'chi' is formed through a morphological process of compounding, where the word emerges as a new form due to sound adjustment and combines 'to' and 'tomaru. As noted in Hidayah's (2018) The study shows that the morphophonemic process occurring in this morpheme is sound change, where the original sound 'to Timaru' is adjusted to the child's articulation as 'chi toma.'

　　　Here is the phoneme alteration:

to tomaru　　　　: **/t/ /o**/　　 /t/ /o/ /m/ /a/ ~~/r/ /u/~~

　　　　　　　　　　　↓

chi toma　　　　: **/c/ /h/ /i**/ /t/ /o/ /m/ /a/

The explanation above indicates that the morpheme 'to' undergoes a phoneme change, with the consonant phoneme /t/ and vowel phoneme /o/changing into the consonant phonemes /c/, /h/, and /i/.

6.　Data (6)

かずま　：おれしまんまみるー

Kazuma　　：　*ore* **shimanma** *miru-*

　　　　：　I want to see a **zebra**

(Mamizuka Kazuma, Gakuen Babysitters Vol 2)

In the data above, the root form of the word しまんま 'shimanma' is しまうま 'shimauma.' In Indonesian, しまうまmeans 'striped horse/zebra' (Matsuura: 915). In this context, in the manga, the children tell Ryuu about the animal they want to see if they go to the zoo. Kazuma mentions that he wants to go to the zoo to see a zebra. The word しまんま 'shimanma' undergoes a morphological borrowing process. Therefore, the children attempt to mimic the pronunciation they hear from adults, using the word 'shimanma' to adjust their articulation as toddlers. As noted in Hidayah's (2018) In the study, the morphophonemic process in 'Shimano' is a phoneme change. Here is the phoneme alteration:

Shimauma : /s/ /h/ /i/ /m/ /a/ **/u/** /m/ /a/

　　　　　　　　　　↓

Shimanma : /s/ /h/ /i/ /m/ /a/ **/n/** /m/ /a/

The explanation above shows that in the morpheme 'shimanma,' the vowel phoneme /u/ changes to the consonant phoneme /n/.

7.   Data (7)

きりん ：<u>ちょっく</u>ぐらいあるもん！

Kirin   : chokku gurai aru mon!

        You can manage it **gradually!**

(Tokeino, 2010)(Kumatsuka kirin, Gakuen Babysitters Vol.3)

In the data above, the root form of the word ちょっく '*chokku*' is ちょっと '*chotto,*' which means 'a moment/a while/a little' (Matsuura: 119). The context of this situation is when Kirin is practicing hard to become a witch who can fly using a broom. Kirin attempts to do the same and hopes to fly like the witch she saw in a storybook. The word undergoes a morphological process of word borrowing. As noted in Hidayah's (2018) study, the morphophonemic process in the word '*chokku*' is a phoneme change.

Chotto : /c/ /h/ /o/ <u>**/t/ /t/ /o/**</u>
                                    ↓   ↓
Chokku : /c/ /h/ /o/ <u>**/k/ /k/ u/**</u>

In the explanation above, phonemic changes occur, with the consonant phoneme /t/ and the vowel phoneme /o/ transforming into the consonant phoneme /k/ and the vowel phoneme /u/.

8.   Data (8)

きりん ：りゅうにいちゃまおめめおけて、<u>おねんねちてまちた</u>

Kirin   : *ryuu nii chama o meme akete,* **onenne chitemachita!**

        Ryuu, open your eyes, **you've been sleeping**

(Tokeino, 2010)(Kumatsuka kirin, gakuen Babysitters Vol.3)

In the data above, the original form of the word おねんねちてまちた 'onennechitemashita' isお寝てしてました '*oneteshitemashita*'. The word is derived from the root verb 寝る 'neu,' which means 'to sleep/lie down' (Matsuura: 712), and is affixed with the prefix お 'o', followed by the past formal form してました 'shitemashita,' indicating an action that has been completed. The word お寝て '*onete*' undergoes morphological changes, specifically reduplication of the morpheme '*nete*', resulting in the new word '*onenne*'. The phoneme change from /t/ /e/ to /n/ /e/ is classified as a morphophonemic process of phoneme transformation. Meanwhile, '*chitemachita*' undergoes a process of morphological borrowing. As mentioned, the morphophonemic process occurs in the phonemes 'onenne' and '*chitemachita*'.

Here are the phoneme changes:

Oneteshitemashita : /o/ /n/ /e/   <u>**/t/ /e/ /s/**</u> /h/ /i/ /t/ /e/ /m/ /a/ <u>**/s/**</u> /h/ /i/ /t/ /a/

                            ↓   ↓

Onennechitemashita : /o/ /n/ /e/ <u>**/n/n/e/**</u> **/c/** /h/ /i/ /t/ /e/ /m/ /a/ <u>**/c/**</u> /h/ /i/ /t/ /a/

In the explanation above, the phoneme change occurs in the consonant phoneme /t/, which transforms into the double consonant phoneme /n/, and the phoneme /s/, which changes into the phoneme /c/.

Phoneme Addition *(On In Tenka)*

9. Data (9)

きりん：<u>おじいしゃん！</u>おばあしゃん！

Kirin : **Ojiishan!** Obaashan!

Granpa!Granma!

(Tokeino, 2010)(Kumatsuka Kirin, Gakuen Babysitters Vol 1)

In the example above, the original word for おじいしゃん"*ojiishan*" is おじさん"*ojiisan*", which in this context means "grandfather/old man" (Matsuura: 755). Kirin is practicing playing a role in the drama Momotaro. Ryuu guides him by having Kirin mimic his dialogue; Ryuu says the lines first, and then Kirin repeats what Ryuu has said. As pronounced by Ryuu, the word "ojiisan" undergoes morphological changes when repeated by Kirin, transforming into "ojiishan". This morphological change involves borrowing.

As noted in Hidayah's (2018) study, the phoneme addition observed in the data above is the morphophonemic change.

ojiisan : /o/ /j/ /i/ /i/ /s/ /a/ /n/
ojiishan : /o/ /j/ /i/ /i/ /s/ **/h/** /a/ /n/

As explained above, a new phoneme appears. This addition is marked by the appearance of the /h/ phoneme.

10. Data (10)

きりん ：こちゃろーちゃんに<u>ほんもにょ</u>のとらみたことないのだしゃいっていった！

Kirin : *kocharo-chan ni hon monyo no tora mita kotonai no da sha itteitta.*
: Kocharo-xhan said Kotaro has never seen a real tiger!

(Tokeino, 2010)(Kumatsuka Kirin, Gakuen Babysitters Vol.2)

In the data above, the base form of ほんもにょ "*honmonyo*" is ほんもの "*honmono*". In this context, it is formed from two morphemes, "*hon*" and "*mono*". Each morpheme has its meaning: "*hon*" means "book" (Matsuura: 304) and "*mono*" means "thing/object" (Matsuura: 659). Combined, they form "*honmono*", which means "real/authentic". In this dialogue scene, when the children are at the daycare with Ryuu and Usaida, Kirin overhears Taka talking to Kotarou about how Kotarou, who is wearing a tiger-themed shirt that day, has never actually seen a real tiger in person. Kirin considers this inappropriate and complains to Kotarou's older brother, Ryuu. From the data above, it can be seen that after the word "*honmono*", the particle "no" follows. The meeting of the two "no" sounds (the one in "*honmono*" and the particle "no") triggers an articulation error, leading to the creation of a new consonant phoneme in the word, forming the new word "honmonyo". This word undergoes a morphological process of borrowing. From the data above,

it can be seen that after the word "*honmono*", the particle "no" follows. The meeting of the two "no" sounds (the one in "*honmono*" and the particle "no") triggers an articulation error, leading to the creation of a new consonant phoneme in the word, forming the new word "*honmonyo*". This word undergoes a morphological process of borrowing. As noted in Hidayah's (2018) study, the morphophonemic change in the data above is the phoneme addition, specifically the emergence of the new consonant phoneme /y/.

Here is the phoneme addition:

Honmono : /h/ /o/ /n/ /m/ /o/ /n/ /o/
Honmonyo : /h/ /o/ /n/ /m/ /o/ /n/ **/y/** /o/

In the explanation above, we can see the appearance of a new phoneme with the addition of the phoneme /y/.

Phoneme Fusion *(On In Yuugou)*

11. Data (11)

たか   : かっけーだろう！！
Taka   : **kakke**- darou!!
          Cool, right!!

(Tokeino, 2010)(Kamitani Taka, Gakuen Babysitters Vol.2)

In the data above, the base form of the word かっけー"*kakkee*" is かっこい"*kakkoi*". The word "kakkoi" is an i-adjective which, in this context, means "cool/attractive" (Gakushudo: 183). The word "*kakkee*" is formed through a morphological borrowing process and undergoes morphophonemic changes, specifically vowel coalescence. As explained above, vowel coalescence occurs when vowels merge, with the resulting vowel following the pattern of the preceding similar vowel. In this case, the coalescence of vowels is marked by merging the vowels /a/ and /i/ into the vowel /e/ in the word "*kakkoi*", forming "*kakkee*".

Kakkoi : /k/ /a/ /k/ /k/ /o/ /i/
Kakkee : /k/ /a/ /k/ /k/ /e/ /e/

In the explanation above, it can be seen that the morpheme "kakkoi" undergoes phoneme coalescence. This is evident from the merging of the vowels /o/ and /i/ into the diphthong /e/ to form "kakkee"

12. Data (12)

たか   : ないでねーもん！
Takan   : **naidene**-mon!
          I'm not crying!

In the data above, the base form of the word ないでねー "*naidenee*" is ないてない "*naitenai*". The word is formed from the morphological change of the mizenkei form of the verb なく "naku", which in this context means "to cry" (Matsuura: 690). Thus, "*naitenai*" means "not crying". The word "*naidenee*" is formed through morphological borrowing and undergoes morphophonemic changes, including phoneme alteration and coalescence.

The phoneme change occurs with transforming the phoneme /t/ into the phoneme /d/. As explained above regarding phoneme coalescence, the merging of vowels follows the pattern of similar vowels. In this case, the phoneme coalescence is marked by merging the vowels /a/ and /i/ into the vowel /e/ in the word "*naitenai*", forming "*naidenee*".
Here is the phoneme coalescence:

Naitenai : /n/ /a/ /i/ /t/ /e/ /n/
/**a**/ /**i**/ Naidenee : /n/ /a/ /i/ /d/
/e/ /n/ /**e**/ /**e**/

From the explanation above, it can be seen that the morpheme "*naitenai*" undergoes two morphophonemic processes: phoneme alteration and phoneme coalescence. This is evident from the change of the consonant phoneme /t/ to the consonant phoneme /d/, as well as the coalescence of the vowels /a/ and /i/ into the diphthong /e/, resulting in "*naidenee*".

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings regarding word formation in children's language in the manga *Gakuen Babysitters* Volumes 1-3, with a focus on morphophonemic processes, this study concludes that several morphophonemic processes are at work within the language used by children in the manga. A total of 12 data instances were analyzed, revealing distinct morphophonemic processes: 2 instances of phoneme deletion, two instances of phoneme reduction, four instances of phoneme change, two instances of phoneme addition, and two instances of phoneme coalescence. Notably, the word formation in these cases largely involved borrowing, suggesting that children's language development is influenced by imitation of sounds and words from their environment, especially from adult speech. This highlights a theoretical contribution by illustrating how morphophonemic processes manifest uniquely in children's language, particularly through borrowing.

Additionally, the absence of phoneme shifting, mentioned in morphophonemic theory, may indicate that certain linguistic structures are incompatible with children's language in specific contexts. This finding suggests that children may selectively adopt language features based on cognitive or linguistic simplicity, providing practical insight for educators and linguists into how children process and produce sounds. Given that this study did not encounter all possible morphophonemic processes, future research could broaden the scope by examining additional data sources, such as other manga or children's media, to capture a wider array of language phenomena and validate the current findings. Future studies may further refine our understanding of language acquisition and morphophonemic variation in children's speech by expanding data sources.

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