

## **HIRAGANA BASED (*GOKON+SOKUON*) FORMS ONOMATOPOEIA IN *SHUUKAN SHOUNEN JANPU***

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research aims to describe the meaning of onomatopoeia written in *hiragana* letters with the morphological form (*gokon+sokuon*) forms. The data source of this research is a weekly manga tabloid entitled *shuukan shounen janpu* edition 6-7 of 2025. this research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method, with reading and recording techniques as the data collection technique. As a result, 25 onomatopoeias were found with the morphological form (*gokon+sokuon*) forms in hiragana writing, which means conditions, movements, or sounds that come from human speech. The meaning of *sokuon* at the end of *gokon* is known not only as a sudden marker but also as a marker of the end of a series of movements symbolized by *gokon*.

**Keywords:** Onomatopoeia, Manga, *Hiragana*, *Gokon*, *Sokuon*.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Onomatopoeia is usually defined as sound imitation words, as stated by Vigliocco, et. al (2020), Motamedi, et. al (2021), Benczes & Szabó (2022), Ardipa, et. al (2023), Khamidovna & Kamola (2024) that words that classified as onomatopoeia imitate or symbolize sounds that occur actually with linguistic rules in each language. However, in Japanese, onomatopoeia is not only defined as words that imitate or symbolize sounds but also words that imitate or symbolize voice, conditions, feelings, appearance, and so on (Ono, 2016). This led to the classification of onomatopoeia in Japanese as *giongo* (sound imitation), *giseigo* (voice imitation), *gitaigo* (condition imitation), *gijougo* (feeling imitation), *giyougo* (appearance imitation) (Kindaichi in Muldani & Ali, 2022).

The large number of onomatopoeias in Japanese with all kinds of classifications even makes Japanese people themselves as native users of Japanese confused in classifying them, especially not a small number of onomatopoeias that do have various meanings, for example, ドキドキ (*doki-doki*) which means the condition of a nervous person,

the feeling of pounding, and also the sound of heartbeat (Ono, 2016). In the end, Ono (2016) states that it is wiser to no longer classify onomatopoeias into smaller parts and call them all by one name, オノマトペ (onomatopoeia).

The use of onomatopoeia in Japanese is spread to almost all aspects of language activities, therefore research related to onomatopoeia can be done from all linguistic perspectives, both phonetics (Petrášová & Křižová 2022), phonology (Körtvélyessy 2020), morphology (Manokaran & Nian 2022), syntax (Andrason & Benson 2024), semantics (Grabar, et. al 2022) as well as pragmatics (Maksimovna 2022). Moreover, onomatopoeia is often considered an iconic symbol, so a semiotic perspective (Körtvélyessy 2024) can also be used in conducting research.

One of the most striking uses of onomatopoeia in Japanese is its use in comics in Japan (more commonly known as manga), which has an important role in bringing sound as well as motion (Hira 2020) to the silent world of manga, dragging readers into the world of manga (Ryu 2023), as well as controlling the tempo of readers in reading the manga (Ohmori, et. al 2020).

In Japanese in general, or in manga in particular, onomatopoeias are naturally written in katakana (Kang 2024). However, this does not mean that the use of other alphabets to write onomatopoeia is prohibited. As proof, take a look at the following figure.1.



Figure 1. shuukan shounen janpu no. 6-7 2025.

The onomatopoeia seen in Figure 1 above is ばっ (/ba+Q/), which is denoted not in the *katakana* letter, but in the *hiragana* letter. So what is the difference between onomatopoeia denoted in *katakana* and onomatopoeia denoted in *hiragana*? This prompted the author to conduct thorough research on onomatopoeia denoted in *hiragana* letters. However, in this research, the focus will only be on onomatopoeias that fall into the morphological form of (*gokon* + *sokuon*) form which is stated to be the onomatopoeia with the highest number of uses in manga (Ali, 2020) to describe the characteristics of onomatopoeias denoted in *Hiragana* letters.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Tamori (1991) states that in Japanese, there are two ways of defining onomatopoeia: first, narrowly, which is defined as words that imitate animal and human voices, and words that imitate sounds that occur in the universe. Secondly, in a broad way, which is defined as a word that also expresses the state of things, movement, pain, psychological conditions, and so on by using language sounds that reflect all of these things, in addition to imitating sounds or voices as defined narrowly.

Further, Ono (2016) states that 3 criteria can be used as indicators of onomatopoeia, namely:

1. The word is a word that expresses sounds that arise other than human speech, such as ワンワン (*wan-wan*/ the sound of a dog barking), トントン (*ton-ton*/the sound of a shoulder being tapped), and so on.



2. It is a word that expresses a sound that comes from human speech, but the sound cannot be deciphered individually. For example オギャーオギャー (*ogyaa-ogyaa*/the sound of a baby crying), ガヤガヤ (*gaya-gaya*/the noise of many people talking), etc.
3. It is a word that expresses something that has no sound by using the sound of the language that corresponds to the sense of the thing. For example ひらひら (*hira-hira*/the flying motion of a butterfly), ぎくり (*gikuri*/the state of a shaken heart), and so on.

Furthermore, Ono (2016) also divides onomatopoeias based on their form, where the base form (*gokon*) could be modified by various sounds, such as *chouon* (—/prolonged vowel sound), *sokuon* (っ/geminate consonant sound), *hatsuon* (ん/syllabic nasal sound), and *choufuku* (duplication of the base form). In the manga, (*gokon+sokuon*) form is often found, and even Ali (2020) states that this form is the most widely used in manga. Therefore, based on this theory, this study will focus on analyzing the (*gokon+sokuon*) form to describe hiragana-based onomatopoeia in the manga. As for the meaning of the (*gokon+sokuon*) form of onomatopoeia stated by Ono (2016) before, added reflects the meaning of a sound or condition that occurs or stops suddenly. In addition, Ono (2016) also states that it can be used as a marker that it is the end of a series of sounds symbolized by the onomatopoeia.

As for the orthography, there are several ways to write onomatopoeia in manga. Kang (2024) states that In general, onomatopoeia in manga will be written using *katakana* letters. However, it cannot be denied that in the manga, in addition to *katakana*, *hiragana* letters are also used to write onomatopoeia, as Yano (2017) explains that both *kana* letters are used to write onomatopoeia in the manga. However, neither Kang (2024) nor Yano (2017) stated the differences in the meaning of onomatopoeia in manga based on which letters are used to write them. Therefore, this research is even more necessary to increase the understanding of the use of onomatopoeia in manga.

Therefore, this study will describe the characteristics of the use of *hiragana* letters in writing onomatopoeia in manga with a focus on onomatopoeia in the form of (*gokon+sokuon*), as stated by the previous research above as the most common form of onomatopoeia in manga to explain the effect of using hiragana letters on the meaning of onomatopoeia used.

## METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted using the descriptive qualitative method, which aims to describe the phenomena that occur as they are without being hidden through onomatopoeic words used in manga. The data collection technique was carried out using the reading and recording technique. The data source in this study is 21 chapters of 21 manga titles serialized in a weekly manga tabloid entitled *shuukan shounen janpu* edition number 6-7 of 2025, published by Shueisha on January 29-30, 2025.

The objects of this study are all onomatopoeias with the morphological form (*gokon+sokuon*) written using hiragana letters and used independently outside of dialogue balloons in all serialized manga titles in the data sources mentioned above.

All collected data will be semantically analyzed according to Ono (2016) to explain the characteristics of onomatopoeia written in hiragana letters, and then the characteristics of the meaning of *sokuon* in each data will be explained to describe the meaning of the *sokuon*.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this study, 25 onomatopoeias with the morphological form (*gokon+sokuon*) were found as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Hiragana Based Onomatopoeia with (*gokon+sokuon*) form on Meaning Classification

No.	Onomatopoeia's Meaning	Frequency
1	Condition, Movement	20
2	Voice	5

As seen in Table 1 above, in terms of meaning, Ono (2016) stated that 20 of the onomatopoeic words found in this research could be assumed to be onomatopoeias that symbolize conditions or movements. On the other hand, only 5 onomatopoeic words that symbolize voices were found in this research, as follows.



**Figure 2.** はっ

As seen in Figure 2 above, the onomatopoeia はっ (/ha+Q/) shows the feeling of surprise at an unexpected event (Ono 2016), which means could be classified as onomatopoeia that symbolizes psychological condition. Similarly, the onomatopoeia appearing in Figure 3, Figure 4, and Figure 5, which will be presented as follows.



**Figure 3.** ぎゅっ



Onomatopoeia ぎゅっ (/gyu+Q/) seen in Figure 3 above means a sudden feeling of surprise and fear (Ono 2016), and just like what was stated in Figure 2 before, this onomatopoeia also could be classified as onomatopoeia that symbolize psychological condition.



Figure 4. ぐいっ

Onomatopoeia ぐいっ (/gui+Q/) in Figure 4 above means a slight movement/action of pulling/pushing something (Ono 2016), which slightly different from what seen in Figure 2 and Figure 3 before, that this onomatopoeic words is could be classified as onomatopoeia that symbolize movement.

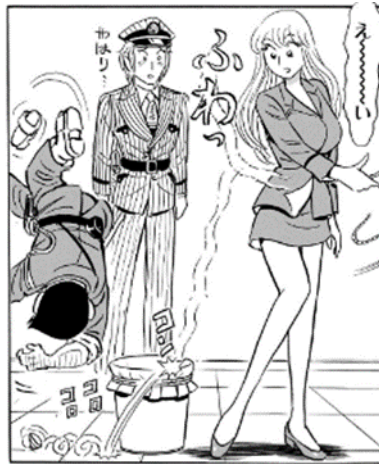


Figure 5. ふわっ

Onomatopoeia ふわっ (/fuwa+Q/) seen in Figure 5 above, mean a movement or condition that feels soft and light (Ono 2016), which means this onomatopoeia could also classified as onomatopoeia that symbolize movement, just like onomatopoeia seen in Figure 4 before.

Looking at the four examples of onomatopoeia written in *hiragana* above, it can be assumed that onomatopoeias written in *hiragana* tend to have non-sound meanings (conditions of movement). However, as can be seen in the following Figure 6 and Figure 7, there are also uses of onomatopoeia with sound meaning written in *hiragana* letters.



Figure 6. きゃっ

Onomatopoeia きゃっ (/kya+Q/) that seen in Figure 6 above mean the voices of children's joyful laughter when playing (Ono 2016). Which means this onomatopoeia could be classified as onomatopoeia that symbolize sound/voice. Similarly, with onomatopoeia ほっ (/ho+Q/) that seen in Figure 7 below that could also be classified as onomatopoeia that symbolize sound/voice because its mean the sound of breathing when feeling relieved (Ono 2016).



Figure 7. ほっ

When looking at the use of onomatopoeia in Figures 6 and Figure 7 above, it can be seen that the similarities between the two are that they both symbolize sounds that come out of human speech. Therefore, it can be concluded that the sounds symbolized by onomatopoeia written in *hiragana* letters are limited to sounds coming out of human speech.

On the other hand, regarding the meaning of *sokuon* at the end of onomatopoeia seen in this study, most of them symbolize something that happens/stops suddenly, as stated by Ono (2016). However, some examples of *sokuon* do not symbolize something that happens suddenly, as follows.



Figure 1. ふろっ



As seen in Figure 8 above, onomatopoeia ふろっ (/furo+Q/) means a body movement that is weakened by the loss of energy and falls slowly (Ono 2016) which could not be assumed as a movement that happens suddenly. This phenomenon is also seen in Figure 9 below, the onomatopoeia ぐりっ (/guri+Q/) which means a turning motion that does not occur smoothly (Ono 2016) which also could not be classified as a movement that happens suddenly.

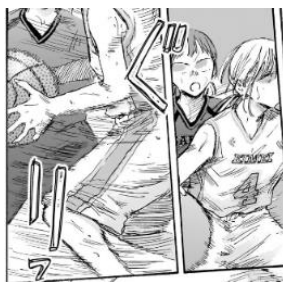


Figure 2. ぐりっ

The examples of onomatopoeic usage seen in Figures 8 and 9 above show that not all *sokuon* in onomatopoeias with the morphological form (*gokon+sokuon*) form symbolize something that happens/stops suddenly. In terms of semantic meaning, both onomatopoeias do not symbolize something that happens/stops suddenly, so it can be assumed that the function of the *sokuon* at the end of the *gokon* in these onomatopoeias is to mark the end of the movement/condition symbolized by the onomatopoeia, as stated by Ono (2016). Then, if we look at the usage of the onomatopoeia found, it is most likely that this *sokuon* function is only seen in onomatopoeias with a *gokon*

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that the 25 onomatopoeias in the morphological form of (*gokon+sokuon*) form written in *hiragana* letters symbolize conditions, movements, or something that does not make a sound, or even sounds that come out of human speech. Meanwhile, the *sokuon* seen in these onomatopoeias not only symbolizes something that happens/stops suddenly but is a sign of the end of the movement symbolized by the onomatopoeia with *gokon* consisting of 2 morae, but it needs further research regarding this matter before making a further conclusion. Another, suggestions that can be proposed from the existing research results are the study of onomatopoeia written in *hiragana* in other morphological forms, or even factually comparing the differences and similarities between onomatopoeia written in *hiragana* and *katakana*.

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