

KEY TYPES OF ACADEMIC TEXTS IN JAPANESE-LANGUAGE JOURNALS

Tipos Fundamentais de Textos Acadêmicos em Periódicos em Língua Japonesa

Rodrigo Moura Lima de ARAGÃO
Faculdade de Tecnologia de Itaquera Professor Miguel Reale, São Paulo, Brasil

ABSTRACT: *Little is known about the types of academic texts published in Japanese journals—except for ronbun (the Japanese scholarly article or paper). This paper sheds some light on the issue by reporting results of an analysis of documents from 88 journals on J-Stage (Japan Science and Technology Information Aggregator, Electronic), a free-access, multidisciplinary, electronic collection of Japanese academic publications. The first step in the process was to find frequent designations in the documents, which were considered clues to chief types of texts. The next step was to describe how Japanese journals conceive the types previously identified. This was done by collecting, translating, and summarizing explanatory excerpts about them. The results may serve as points of departure for including Japanese academic writing in the teaching of Japanese.*

KEYWORDS: Academic Japanese; Japanese for specific purposes; Academic writing; Scholarly publication

RESUMO: *Sabe-se pouco sobre os tipos de textos acadêmicos publicados em periódicos japoneses – exceto pela categoria ronbun (o artigo acadêmico japonês). Este trabalho dirige-se a essa lacuna apresentando resultados de um estudo de documentos de 88 periódicos da J-Stage (Japan Science and Technology Information Aggregator, Electronic), base eletrônica de acesso aberto de revistas acadêmicas japonesas de diferentes áreas. O primeiro passo do estudo foi encontrar designações frequentes nos documentos, as quais foram consideradas evidências de tipos fundamentais de textos. O passo seguinte foi descrever como os periódicos japoneses concebem os tipos identificados. Isso foi feito por meio da coleta, da tradução e da compilação de excertos explicativos a seu respeito. Os resultados podem servir como pontos de partida para a inclusão da escrita acadêmica japonesa no ensino de japonês.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Japonês acadêmico; Japonês para fins específicos; Escrita acadêmica; publicação acadêmica

1. Introduction

The number of foreign students in Japan has increased dramatically in the last two decades, from about 54,000 to over 180,000 persons (Japan Student Services Organization, 2004, 2015). Such a rise carries important implications for the teaching of Japanese, since it injects urgency into the challenge of enabling foreign students to succeed—with words—at universities and other higher education institutions in Japan.

Classes aimed at Japanese for academic purposes undoubtedly are the most clear, direct response to this challenge. Yet, they are not the only response. In fact, classroom initiatives have been accompanied by investigative efforts on Japanese for study and research activities. Generally, these efforts address issues raised by and provide input to the teaching of Japanese to foreign students, that is, they stem from and inform Japanese language teaching.

A considerable body of research has been done on academic texts written in Japanese, including such features as sentence patterns (Muraoka, 1999; Eya, 2011), in-text citations (Nitsū, 2009; Shizuma, 2010), and textual organization (Muraoka, 2002; Muraoka et al., 2004; Muraoka et al., 2005; Murakami, 2005; Kimoto, 2006).¹ Because most of this research focuses on the Japanese scholarly article or paper, *ronbun*, uncertainty still exists about what other types of academic texts are standard in Japanese. Another gap in previous research has to do with the nature of the Japanese types of academic texts. With the exception of written works whose content does not strictly derive from documented research, such as those by Todayama (2002), Suwa (2005), and Kinoshita (2008), the subject has been given little attention. It remains unclear, for example, the extent to which a *sōsetsu* (“overview”) should be regarded as a review article. Little is also known about the scope of other types of texts, such as *shiryō* (“material”) and *tanpō* (“short report”).

In view of the prominent position that some types of academic texts occupy in the teaching of Japanese to foreign students, filling these gaps seems relevant to it. The

¹ Names of Japanese authors are given in the Roman alphabet as they appear in cited works. When a romanized name was unavailable, the Japanese name was transliterated according to the revised Hepburn system.

present paper contributes to this goal by reporting results of an analysis of *tōkō kitei* (“contribution rules”), *shippitsu yōryō* (“writing essentials”), and *tebiki* (“guide”) from Japanese journals. The aim of the analysis was twofold: (1) to identify key types of academic texts in Japanese journals and (2) to provide an initial description of the identified types from the perspective of Japanese scholarly publications.

2. Data and Methods of Analysis

The data consisted of *tōkō kitei*, *shippitsu yōryō*, and *tebiki* (henceforth “sets of instructions”) from 88 journals on the Japan Science and Technology Information Aggregator, Electronic (J-Stage). J-Stage is a free-access collection of Japanese journals that covers six areas: (1) basic sciences, (2) life sciences, (3) medical and health sciences, (4) engineering and technology, (5) interdisciplinary sciences, and (6) humanities and social sciences. It provides access to 1,722 journals, 535 of which are published in Japanese, 359 in English, and 828 in both English and Japanese (Japan Science and Technology Agency, 2015).

The sets of instructions were selected according to the following criteria: (a) only sets of instructions from Japanese-language journals were eligible, (b) only sets of instructions available on the Internet were eligible, and (c) only sets of instructions containing a description of manuscript categories accepted for publication were eligible.

In order to avoid unduly favoring one single domain, sets of instructions from 15 journals of every area were retrieved, with the exception of humanities and social sciences—in respect of which only sets from 13 journals met the above requirements. In spite of this rough uniformity, variations across disciplines could not be studied because some components of the data seem to be related to two or more areas (this is indicated by the fact that the association made by J-Stage between the journals to which they relate and areas is not exclusive).

The sets of instructions were examined, and their descriptions of manuscript categories were recorded. All designations for types of texts found in the descriptions were catalogued, including those just mentioned, but designations belonging to other parts of the documents were ignored. A fundamental assumption is that designations

provided by journals matter. On the one hand, distinct designations are evidence of either distinct types of texts or distinct views about a single type; on the other hand, homogeneity in the way a given type is called indicates that it is possibly an established one (Aragão, 2012). Therefore, only identical designations were grouped, with two exceptions: instances of English designations were grouped with instances of their respective *katakana* equivalents (e.g., short paper with *shōtopēpa*); one instance containing the Japanese particle *no* (*gencho no ronbun*, “original paper”) was grouped with instances that have no particle (*gencho ronbun*, “original paper”). After the collection and counting of designations, attention was turned to the descriptions of those found in at least one fifth of the data—they were considered clues to chief types of texts. Excerpts exclusively regarding each of them (henceforth “definitions”) were extracted from overall descriptions and put together. Next, three definitions of each type of text were selected by simple random sampling and translated into English to provide local pictures of the types. Subsequently, for the purpose of making a broader description with the help of a concordance software program (Anthony, 2014), the sets of definitions were segmented. The criteria below were used in an attempt to maximize the focus on the essence of the types of texts, particularly by increasing the number of similar words that this kind of software can sort.

1. Stems of *i*-adjectives and verbs were separated from their endings. Segmented examples: *atarashi i* (“new”), *hiro i* (“wide”), *fuku mu* (“contain”), and *matome ta* (“arranged”). Exceptions: stems of verbs whose meaning depends fundamentally on preceding words, such as *suru* (“do”).
2. Common nouns were separated from either their suffixes or prefixes. Segmented examples: *sho bun 'ya* (“many fields”) and *shinrai sei* (“reliability”).
3. Common compound nouns were segmented into two or more parts. Segmented examples: *mondai teiki* (“issue raising”) and *shippitsu irai* (“writing request”).
4. Proper nouns were not segmented.
5. Japanese particles, connectives, sentence endings, punctuation marks, and other constituents of the data were isolated.

Efforts were then made to produce summaries of the essential meanings attributed by Japanese journals to each of the main types of academic texts found. First, frequent

descriptive words (mainly nouns, adjectives, and verbs) were searched for within the sets of definitions, and their meanings were examined in context. Thereafter, one or two sentences for each word were written in an attempt to depict its gist concerning the type of text in question. The process was repeated for less and less frequent words. Finally, regarding words whose occurrence was limited to a single instance, only sentences about those that appear to indicate peculiarities in the way a specific type of text is seen were written. The following tools of the concordance software program were used as facilitators of the analysis: Word List, Concordance, File View, and Collocates (Anthony, 2014).

3. Results

The results of the initial analysis—aimed to identify key types of academic texts in Japanese-language journals—are summarized in the next section. Section 3.2 shows the results of the second stage of the study, which was devoted to describe the types identified in the first stage from the perspective of Japanese academic publications.

3.1. Key Types of Academic Texts

An impressive total of 279 designations were observed in the data. Most of them were seen in sets of instructions from one to four journals; just six designations were found in more than one fifth of the data (Table 1). Among them, *sōsetsu* is the only whose frequency exceeds half of the sets of instructions. Yet, *shiryō*, *kaisetsu* (“explanation”), *gencho ronbun*, *tanpō*, and *shohyō* (“book review”) were also interpreted as evidence of key types of academic texts. Indeed, the remarkably large number of designations points to a high degree of specialization in Japanese journals. Apparently, Japanese scholarly publications hold such a narrow conception of certain types of texts that the names they adopt are distinct; or they may be publishing overly specialized content. In one case or another, the presence in a minimum of 20 out of the 88 sets of instructions is a clear sign of the importance of the types the six designations represent. *Sōsetsu*, *shiryō*, *kaisetsu*,

gencho ronbun, *tanpō*, and *shohyō* are likely to play a substantial role in Japanese journals.

Table 1. Designations found in more than 20% of the data.

Japanese Designation (“Preliminary Translation”)	Sets of Instructions (n = 88)	
	N	(%)
<i>Sōsetsu</i> (“Overview”)	46	52.3
<i>Shiryō</i> (“Material”)	25	28.4
<i>Kaisetsu</i> (“Explanation”)	21	23.9
<i>Gencho Ronbun</i> (“Original Paper”)	20 ^a	22.7 ^a
<i>Tanpō</i> (“Short Report”)	20	22.7
<i>Shohyō</i> (“Book Review”)	20	22.7

^aIncludes one instance of *gencho no ronbun*.

3.2. The Key Types of Academic Texts from the Viewpoint of Japanese Journals²

Exclusive definitions of each type of text were found in different amounts, as Table 2 shows. A possible explanation for this variation may lie in the level of agreement among Japanese journals—it can be hypothesized that there might be more discrepancies in the way publications conceive *sōsetsu*, *shiryō*, *kaisetsu*, *gencho ronbun*, and *tanpō* than in the way they conceive *shohyō*, which would increase the need for definitions of the former five. The presentation of the nature of the six types follows the same order as in Tables 1 and 2, beginning with *sōsetsu*.

Table 2. Number of exclusive definitions per type of text.

Type of Text	No. of Definitions
<i>Sōsetsu</i>	35
<i>Shiryō</i>	22
<i>Kaisetsu</i>	17
<i>Gencho Ronbun</i>	17
<i>Tanpō</i>	17
<i>Shohyō</i>	8

² For the purpose of making all definitions easily distinguishable, even short definitions are displayed here with a format that is typical of long quotations.

The *Kansai Ika Daigaku Zasshi* (*The Journal of Kansai Medical University*) depicts *sōsetsu* as a comprehensive article that is rooted on materials and the like, in addition to the literature:

An article that comprehensively reviews a particular field, theme, and the like, based on pertinent literature, materials, etc. (Kansai Ika Daigaku Gakkai, ca. 2014: item 1)

In the same way, *Supōtsu Manejimento Kenkyū* (*the Japanese Journal of Sport Management*) delimits *sōsetsu* as a thorough, impartial summary, which additionally possesses the qualities of being scientific, reliable, and universal:

Having sport management as its target, *sōsetsu* summarizes comprehensively and objectively a particular theme related to this research domain, based on a review of the literature and the like. In addition, it especially possesses scientificity, reliability, and universality. (Nihon Supōtsu Manejimento Gakkai, 2012:1)

Sōsetsu may be acknowledged also as a wide survey on a subject that covers its past, present, and future, as presented by the *Nihon Genshiryoku Gakkai Wabun Ronbunshi* (*Transactions of the Atomic Energy Society of Japan*):

It surveys widely—both domestically and internationally—on a particular research field, research task, technique, or the like, including such aspects as its background, importance, state of progress, and future direction of development. Essential research issues of the field are picked up and described systematically. It is not simply a separated enumeration of research results; their interrelationship is made clear within it. (Nihon Genshiryoku Gakkai, 2012: section 4)

The attempt to make a comprehensive description of *sōsetsu* has led to the results displayed in Table 3. A general notion of this type of text appears to involve the Japanese words *kenkyū* (“research”), *tokutei* (“specific”), *sōkatsu* (“summary”), *bun’ya* (“field”), and *bunken* (“literature”). It focuses on a specific issue or domain; it summarizes previous investigations reported in the literature. Such a notion resembles those of literature reviews (American Psychological Association, 2010:10) and review articles (Swales, 2004:208–210), whose emphasis is on previously published works. It seems reasonable, therefore, to call *sōsetsu* as either the Japanese literature review or the Japanese review article. Less common features of this type of text apparently include an outlook on future

developments and an overview of transitions in a given field. Finally, the association between *sōsetsu* and *orijinariti* (“originality”), which was found once, is noteworthy because it stresses the idea that *sōsetsu* must present novelty, though not the one directly derived from original research.

Table 3. Results of the analysis of the complete set of definitions of *sōsetsu*.

No. of Occurrences	Word	Summary of Meaning
31	<i>Kenkyū</i> (“Research”)	Its main concern is previous research.
15	<i>Tokutei</i> (“Specific”)	It focuses on a specific subject or branch of knowledge.
13	<i>Sōkatsu</i> (“Summary”)	It summarizes research achievements.
11	<i>Bun’ya</i> (“Field”)	It deals with issues related to one field.
9	<i>Bunken</i> (“Literature”)	It reviews the literature.
8	<i>Tēma</i> (“Theme”)	It focuses on one theme.
8	<i>Ronbun</i> (“Paper”)	It presents and reviews papers, especially research papers.
6	<i>Taikei</i> (“System”)	It displays its content in a systematic way.
6	<i>Irai</i> (“Request”)	It should be written only on request.
6	<i>Saikin</i> (“Recently”)	It concerns recent progress, development, research, and techniques associated with one area.
6	<i>Chiken</i> (“Knowledge”)	It systematizes knowledge.
6	<i>Kaisetsu</i> (“Explanation”)	It provides explanations of the literature.
5	<i>Chosha</i> (“Author”)	It may focus on the author’s own previous works.
4	<i>Tenbō</i> (“Outlook”)	It may provide an outlook on future developments of the field in question.
3	<i>Suii</i> (“Transition”)	It may include an overview of the transitions that take place in a particular field.
1	<i>Orijinariti</i> (“Originality”)	It leads to original conclusions.

Turning now to *shiryō*, the *Nihon Eiyō Shokuryō Gakkaishi* (the *Journal of Japan Nutrition and Food Science*) states that this type of text includes information related to analyses and results that are basically associated with two attributes, namely usefulness and methodological appropriateness:

Shiryō includes useful information for research and practice activities by members of this society by publishing, among other things, analyses of several food components based on appropriate analytical methods and useful results based on appropriate methods of investigation. (Nihon Eiyō Shokuryō Gakkai, 2011: item 2)

The *Nihon Kaisui Gakkaishi* (the *Bulletin of the Society of Sea Water Science, Japan*), in contrast, describes *shiryō* as a collection of either research results or different sorts of data:

It gathers either results of investigations or physical properties data, design data, and systematically accumulated measurement data. (Nihon Kaisui Gakkai, 2014: Table 1)

An original and short document reporting tests, data, or findings is an additional form of conceiving *shiryō*, as the definition from *Seitai Ikōgaku* (*Transactions of Japanese Society for Medical and Biological Engineering*) shows:

Among other things, reports of tests on instruments, components, and the like, design data, and results of investigations on medical and biological engineering, whose publication is thought to be useful for readers. Also, it must be unpublished and non-submitted material. As a rule, it should be no more than two printed pages. (Nihon Seitai Ikōgakkai, 2010: section 2)

The results of the examination of the full set of definitions of *shiryō* are displayed in Table 4. On the one hand, it seems that this type of text is usually related to the Japanese words *dēta* (“data”), *hōkoku* (“report”), *kenkyū* (“research”), and *kachi* (“value”). It displays data. It can assume the shape of a report. It should be useful for research; it should be valuable. On the other hand, connecting *shiryō* with *kēsu sutadi* (“case study”) and *ron* (“theory”) is apparently outside the mainstream; this connection reveals a peculiar way of delimiting it. Unlike *sōsetsu*, *shiryō* seems to lack a counterpart in journals written in languages other than Japanese.

Table 4. Results of the analysis of the complete set of definitions of *shiryō*.

No. of Occurrences	Word	Summary of Meaning
8	<i>Dēta</i> (“Data”)	It presents data. Still, it may be thought of as data.
7	<i>Hōkoku</i> (“Report”)	It can be a report, generally an empirical one.

7	<i>Kenkyū</i> (“Research”)	Its content should be useful for research.
6	<i>Kachi</i> (“Value”)	It should be valuable.
5	<i>Jōhō</i> (“Information”)	It includes information. Also, it may be assumed as information.
5	<i>Chōsa</i> (“Investigation”)	Its content stems from investigations.
5	<i>Ronbun</i> (“Paper”)	It may be considered a sort of paper.
4	<i>Jissen</i> (“Practice”)	It should be useful for practice.
2	<i>Hatten</i> (“Development”)	It should contribute to the development of a branch of knowledge.
1	<i>Kēsu Sutadi</i> (“Case Study”)	It may be a case study.
1	<i>Riron</i> (“Theory”)	It may report suggestions regarding theory.

The next category to be considered is *kaisetsu*. The *Haikibutsu Shigen Junkan Gakkaishi (Materials Cycles and Waste Management Research)* describes it as a clear explanation about both recent events and cross-disciplinary issues:

It explains for the general public in an intelligible way new facts about techniques, systems, current problems, etc. concerning waste and material cycles, as well as problems and the like across disciplinary boundaries. (Haikibutsu Shigen Junkan Gakkai, 2010: section 2)

An exposition of findings that includes a review of the literature and non-textual resources is how the definition given by *Jinkō Zōki* (literally, “artificial organs”) depicts it:

It explains intelligibly recent findings about artificial internal organs and related fields. The fundamental literature should be provided. Including figures and tables, it should be no more than 12,000 characters (8 printed pages). (Nihon Jinkō Zōki Gakkai, 2010: section 1)

Kaisetsu may also be assumed as a clear, detailed description of recent knowledge, as the definition provided by the *Zen Nihon Shinkyū Gakkai Zasshi (the Journal of the Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion)* states:

This column describes in an intelligible and explanatory way recent domestic and foreign knowledge about problems related to acupuncture, moxibustion, and related domains. (Zen Nihon Shinkyū Gakkai, 2013:6)

Table 5 shows the results of the analysis of the entire set of definitions of *kaisetsu*. It seems that this type of text is perceived by Japanese journals in many ways, ranging from the introduction and presentation of topics or research to book reviews. Nonetheless, efforts to form a general conception of *kaisetsu* apparently lead to the idea of an intelligible exposition of subjects related to recent research and techniques for a wide readership. Furthermore, intelligibility appears to be its central feature—the occurrences of the Japanese words *shōkai* (“introduction”), *rikai* (“understanding”), *wakariyasui* (“intelligible”), and *heii* (“plain”) support this claim. Like *shiryō*, *kaisetsu* appears to lack a counterpart in non-Japanese-language journals.

Table 5. Results of the analysis of the complete set of definitions of *kaisetsu*.

No. of Occurrences	Word	Summary of Meaning
10	<i>Gijutsu</i> (“Technique”)	It provides explanations about techniques.
7	<i>Kenkyū</i> (“Research”)	It presents research.
6	<i>Shōkai</i> (“Introduction”)	It introduces topics, data, or trends.
4	<i>Kaiin</i> (“A Member of a Society”)	It should be readable for members of the society in question who have no acquaintance with the topic.
4	<i>Rikai</i> (“Understanding”)	It should be easily understood.
4	<i>Wakariyasui</i> (“Intelligible”)	It is intelligible.
3	<i>Heii</i> (“Plain”)	Its writing is plain.
3	<i>Atarashii</i> (“New”)	It concerns new things.
2	<i>Shōrai</i> (“Future”)	It may consider the future of a particular domain.
2	<i>Kiji</i> (“Article”)	It may be considered a sort of article.
1	<i>Genmitsu</i> (“Strictness”)	It may forgo strictness somewhat.
1	<i>Hōkoku</i> (“Report”)	Meeting reports may be carried in the <i>kaisetsu</i> section.
1	<i>Shohyō</i> (“Book Review”)	Book reviews may be included in the <i>kaisetsu</i> section.

Gencho ronbun, the fourth of the six types, is described by *Supōtsu Manejimento Kenkyū* as a collection of original findings with many attributes:

“*Gencho ronbun*” collates original research results, whose content has high scientific value and possesses scientificity, usefulness, originality, reliability, and universality. (Nihon Supōtsu Manejimento Gakkai, 2012:1)

Taiikugaku Kenkyū (the *Japan Journal of Physical Education, Health and Sport Sciences*), in contrast, associates it to features of scientific papers, stressing the need to lead to fresh, scientific knowledge:

“*Gencho ronbun*” has a content and format that is specific to scientific papers and must lead to new, scientific knowledge. However, since there are differences between the structure of papers of the humanities and of the natural sciences, please use a structure, headings and the like for the paper in accordance with the research field in question. (Nihon Taiiku Gakkai, 2013: section 1)

The definition proposed by *Tokushu Kyōikugaku Kenkyū* (*The Japanese Journal of Special Education*) depicts *gencho ronbun* broadly, including not only experimentation but also theory and instances of the field:

Gencho ronbun is a research paper on theory, experimentation, instances, and so forth. (Nihon Tokushu Kyōiku Gakkai, 2011: item 3)

Table 6 provides the results of the examination of the entire set of definitions of *gencho ronbun*. As can be seen, two words apparently perform a fundamental role in how Japanese journals conceive this type of text: *kenkyū* (“research”) and *ronbun* (“paper”). *Gencho ronbun* is, fundamentally, a paper that presents results of an investigation. This notion is similar to worldwide conceptions of either research (Swales 1990:93) or scientific (Day 1998:8) papers; thus, *gencho ronbun* can be acknowledged as the Japanese research or scientific paper. Additionally, as Table 6 shows, it can be thought of as research, so that the work behind the text and the text itself may be barely distinguishable from one another. Originality and novelty also seem to be relevant when it comes to depicting this type of text from the perspective of Japanese journals. Unlike *sōsetsu*, *gencho ronbun* should display new, fresh findings. Its conception, moreover, appears to cross empirical boundaries, covering in some cases even theoretical and basic issues.

Table 6. Results of the analysis of the complete set of definitions of *gencho ronbun*.

No. of Occurrences	Word	Summary of Meaning
--------------------	------	--------------------

18	<i>Kenkyū</i> (“Research”)	It displays research results. It may be considered research.
15	<i>Ronbun</i> (“Paper”)	It is a kind of paper.
8	<i>Dokusō</i> (“Original”)	Its content is original.
6	<i>Shinki</i> (“Novel”)	It possesses novelty.
5	<i>Matomeru</i> (“Collate”)	It collates research results.
5	<i>Kachi</i> (“Value”)	Its content is valuable.
5	<i>Ketsuron</i> (“Conclusion”)	It contains conclusions.
4	<i>Jissen</i> (“Practice”)	It may be orientated towards practice.
4	<i>Riron</i> (“Theory”)	It may be a theoretical paper.
4	<i>Chiken</i> (“Knowledge”)	It presents knowledge.
1	<i>Kiso</i> (“Foundation”)	It may concern the foundations of a branch of knowledge.
1	<i>Kansei</i> (“Completion”)	It has a high degree of completion.
1	<i>Ōyō</i> (“Application”)	It may concern the application of a particular domain.

With respect to *tanpō*, the *Kankyō Kagaku Kaishi (Environmental Science)* presents it as a short report with new and valuable content:

Tanpō is a short report that contains new facts and valuable data, among other things. (Kankyō Kagaku Kai, 2013:1)

The definition offered by *Ganseki Kōbutsu Kagaku (the Japanese Magazine of Mineralogical and Petrological Sciences)* resembles the one above, but it ascribes to *tanpō* the nature of a paper:

A short paper that has as its main content a description of or a simple report on new facts and the like. (Nihon Kōbutsu Kagaku Kai, ca. 2014: item 3)

A broader definition is given by the *Zen Nihon Shinkyū Gakkai Zasshi*; it associates *tanpō* to research as well as to quick and preliminary reports:

This column is limited to research and reports. Either quick reports full of originality or preliminary reports are the target. After publication in this column, the journal does not carry an original work with the same content. (Zen Nihon Shinkyū Gakkai, 2013:5)

The results of the analysis of the full set of definitions of *tanpō* are displayed in Table 7. As can be seen, this type of text tends to be acknowledged as either a *ronbun* (“paper”) or a *hōkoku* (“report”). In addition, *tanpō* may be regarded as *kenkyū* (“research”) and as a *sokuhō* (“quick report”), as already shown. Its main attributes seem to be novelty, conciseness, and originality. In this sense, *tanpō* resembles what Swales and Feak (2004:217) call “short communications,” which perform the function of “report on a rare or unusual phenomenon” (Swales and Feak, 2004:217). Thus, it seems fair to regard *tanpō* as the Japanese short communication, in addition to view it as the Japanese short or quick report. The essential distinguishing feature in relation to *gencho ronbun* is likely to be conciseness.

Table 7. Results of the analysis of the complete set of definitions of *tanpō*.

No. of Occurrences	Word	Summary of Meaning
11	<i>Ronbun</i> (“Paper”)	It is a kind of paper.
9	<i>Hōkoku</i> (“Report”)	It is a report. Still, it reports something.
7	<i>Kenkyū</i> (“Research”)	It is a piece of research.
6	<i>Atarashii</i> (“New”)	It presents new facts, findings, knowledge, or methods.
6	<i>Mijikai</i> (“Short”)	It is short.
6	<i>Gencho</i> (“Original Work”)	It is similar to original works in terms of substance.
5	<i>Sokuhō</i> (“Quick Report”)	It is a quick report or possesses the attributes of one.
4	<i>Kachi</i> (“Value”)	Its content is valuable.
4	<i>Dokusō</i> (“Originality”)	It is full of originality.
1	<i>Jōhō</i> (“Information”)	Its information may be either limited or little.
1	<i>Riron</i> (“Theory”)	It may be about theory.
1	<i>Ronshō</i> (“Demonstration”)	It may include a demonstration.

The remaining type of text is *shohyō*. *Supōtsu Manejimento Kenkyū* describes it as a clear outline of a book, or of part of it, that includes some kind of discussion of the summarized content:

Shohyō is a clear outline of part of a book or an entire book related to fields of interest for this academic society, and it includes the raising of issues following

this content. It possesses in particular scientificity, reliability, and universality. (Nihon Supōtsu Manejimento Gakkai, 2012:1)

Kōdō Keiryōgaku (The Japanese Journal of Behaviormetrics) unexpectedly presents *shohyō* as a research paper that should situate a book in a research context:

Also, *shohyō* is not simply the advertisement of a book; it is a research paper that makes clear the place that the book occupies within a review of connected fields. (Nihon Kōdō Keiryō Gakkai, ca. 2014: item 1)

The *Nihon Eiseigaku Zasshi (the Japanese Journal of Hygiene)* describes *shohyō* as the record of an expert's impressions and opinions concerning a book from a particular field:

It records impressions and opinions about a book on hygiene and public health from the perspective of a specialist. Texts that are considered to be advertisements for selling books are not published. In the case that the submission of a contribution is desired, the Editorial Committee should be consulted in advance. (Nihon Eisei Gakkai, 2012: section 1)

Table 8 provides the results of the analysis of the exclusive definitions of *shohyō*. As expected, *shoseki* ("book") is apparently the most important word for describing this type of text. *Shohyō* introduces a book; it essentially condenses and discusses the content of a book. This clearly agrees with the literature on book reviews (e.g., Motta-Roth, 1996, 2001); therefore, it is possible to consider *shohyō* as the Japanese book review.

Table 8. Results of the analysis of the complete set of definitions of *shohyō*.

No. of Occurrences	Word	Summary of Meaning
5	<i>Shoseki</i> ("Book")	It deals with books.
4	<i>Naiyō</i> ("Content")	It presents the content of a book and raises questions about this content.
4	<i>Gaiyō</i> ("Summary")	It summarizes a book.
1	<i>Irai</i> ("Request")	It should be prepared only upon request.
1	<i>Ronbun</i> ("Paper")	It is a sort of paper.

4. Suggestions for the Teaching of Japanese

Japanese academic writing courses offered to international students in Japan usually focus on two types of texts: *ronbun* and *repōto* (“report”). Examples are the courses offered at the International Student Center of Hokkaido University (2015:74) and at Yamagata University (ca. 2015: *Kōsu no Gaiyō*, section I). In addition, textbooks on academic writing in Japanese—commonly used in these courses—are often structured around the same types of texts (see Hamada, Hirao, and Yui, 1997; Sasaki, Hosoi, and Fujio, 2006). Focusing on *ronbun* and *repōto*, however, can pose difficulties for students. Indeed, *ronbun* is such a broad category that it may be troublesome to achieve a clear understanding of its nature. As the findings have shown, in Japanese journals the term *ronbun* is associated with different types of texts, including *gencho ronbun*, *tanpō*, and *shohyō*. There are also the Japanese master’s thesis, *shūshi ronbun*, the Japanese doctoral dissertation, *hakushi ronbun*, and the short essay that is written for job selection processes in Japan, *shō ronbun* (see Bando, 2015). The same can be said about the *repōto* category, since anything from research experiments to travel expenses may constitute the subject of a report. Whereas international students may be unlikely to submit manuscripts to Japanese journals (at least, in the Japanese language), their comprehension of academic writing in Japanese can be enhanced through the consideration of more specific types of texts found in these publications. Directing attention to well-defined types of texts from Japanese journals would allow learners to explore typical features of Japanese academic writing in detail and perhaps in a more tangible way. Such an approach naturally leads to the question as to what types of texts should be covered, for which the present paper offers an answer: *sōsetsu*, *shiryō*, *kaisetsu*, *gencho ronbun*, *tanpō*, and *shohyō*.

Table 9 provides an overview of the six types of texts. Both the descriptions given in the previous section and this overview can be useful to introduce *sōsetsu*, *shiryō*, *kaisetsu*, *gencho ronbun*, *tanpō*, and *shohyō* in Japanese classes, with the advantage of being based on documents from Japanese journals.

Table 9. Key types of academic texts from Japanese-language journals.

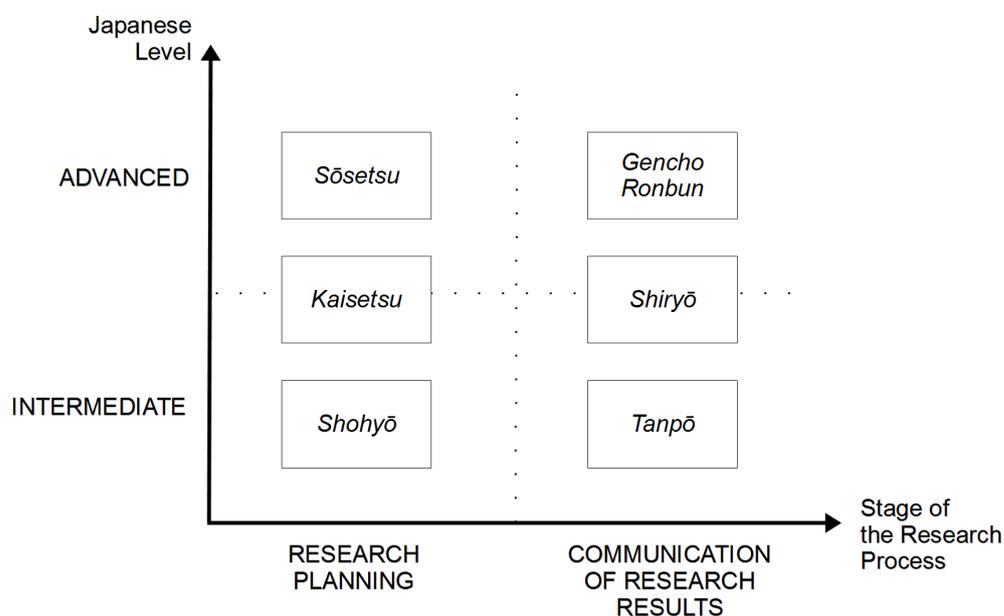
Type of Text	Keywords	Essential Definition
<i>Sōsetsu</i>	Previous research, specific subject, summary.	A summary of previous research studies on a specific topic.
<i>Shiryō</i>	Data, research, report, usefulness.	A report of useful data or research results.

<i>Kaisetsu</i>	Recent research, recent techniques, explanation, intelligibility.	An intelligible explanation on recent research findings or recent techniques.
<i>Gencho Ronbun</i>	Research results, originality, novelty.	A paper presenting original research results.
<i>Tanpō</i>	Research, conciseness, novelty.	A short report of new facts or findings.
<i>Shohyō</i>	Book, content, outline.	An outline of the content of a book with commentaries.

Students may benefit most from the analysis and discussion of published texts, the kind of task already proposed in the literature (Nitsū, 2006:109–110). For instance, examining a sample of *sōsetsu* from *Rōdō Anzen Eisei Kenkyū* (the *Journal of Occupational Safety and Health*), an open-access journal on J-Stage, could be useful to deepen their understanding about the way literature reviews (an essential part of academic writing) are performed in Japanese. Observing one or two texts of the *gencho ronbun* type from *Supōtsu Shinrigaku Kenkyū* (the *Japanese Journal of Sport Psychology*), another journal on J-Stage, might be worthwhile in that it would help students to become familiar with how research findings are reported in the Japanese language.

It is possible to group the six types of texts on the basis of what seems to be their fundamental nature. On the one hand, *sōsetsu*, *kaisetsu*, and *shohyō* are likely to share the focus on reviewing content from other texts. On the other hand, *shiryō*, *gencho ronbun*, and *tanpō* seem to have in common the emphasis on reporting processes and results. Exploring the former might be of particular interest to students writing research projects, since at the early stage of the research process considerable effort must be put into reviewing past literature. In contrast, exploring the latter may be of great interest to students writing research articles, master's theses, or doctoral dissertations, because at advanced stages of the research process attention is turned to giving an account of what has been done and found. Figure 1 shows a proposal to include *sōsetsu*, *shiryō*, *kaisetsu*, *gencho ronbun*, *tanpō*, and *shohyō* in academic Japanese classes according to this classification as well as to the level of Japanese of students (intermediate or advanced).

Figure 1. Proposal to include key types of texts from Japanese-language journals in academic Japanese classes.



The six types may be approached either separately or in group. Although limitation to a single type can make it possible to grasp many of its specific attributes, considering a collection also has merits. *Gencho ronbun* reports original results from one investigation; *sōsetsu*, in turn, gathers results from several past investigations that were displayed in original works like *gencho ronbun*. That is, the notion of the latter depends partially on the former; they are interconnected. By observing this kind of interrelationship, it is possible to acquire a better comprehension of the nature of the types in question—as Bakhtin (2003:298) noticed, it is impracticable to fully understand the style of an “utterance” without considering its connections with other utterances. The same reasoning can be applied to Japanese- and non-Japanese-language academic texts. Comparisons between review articles and *sōsetsu*, research papers and *gencho ronbun*, book reviews and *shohyō*, for example, may allow students to take a step forward in academic Japanese. For the teacher, it is a challenging approach because he or she has to put great efforts to guide students; for the learner, however, it seems a worthy one, for it involves the broadening of horizons of Japanese and particularly of Japanese academic writing.

5. Concluding Remarks

Suggestions for the teaching of Japanese have been primarily made with the focus on courses offered at higher education institutions in Japan, the natural locus for academic Japanese teaching. In spite of this, it is expected that the suggestions—as well as this paper’s findings—may also be of value to teachers of Japanese from other countries who (wish to) cover Japanese academic writing in their classes. Many Japanese electronic journals, such as those on J-Stage, provide unrestricted access to published content at no cost; therefore, it is possible for people outside Japan to adopt texts from these journals as study materials. In addition to being free of charge, they have the advantages of presenting an average length that is suitable for both classroom activities and homework assignments and of exhibiting vocabularies composed mostly of plain words (yet full of technical terms). Moreover, texts from Japanese journals might be an interesting alternative to diversify curriculum.

Last but not least, a limitation of the analysis performed is that it provides no insights into particular instances of texts. Further research should therefore include the examination of samples of *sōsetsu*, *shiryō*, *kaisetsu*, *gencho ronbun*, *tanpō*, and *shohyō*. Particularly, comparative studies involving academic texts written in Japanese and in other languages would be worthwhile. With respect to *shiryō* and *kaisetsu*, which appear to lack counterparts in non-Japanese-language publications, it would be interesting to contrast texts of these categories from several Japanese journals so that subject range could be better understood. To fill critical gaps in knowledge, it seems crucial that research on academic Japanese be comprehensive.

References

- AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION. 2010. *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. Washington: American Psychological Association.
- ANTHONY, L. 2014. *AntConc Version 3.4.3* (Computer software). Tōkyō: Waseda University. Available from <<http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/>> Accessed: 5 January 2015.
- ARAGÃO, R.M.L. 2012. Acendendo as velas: A escrita científica no Brasil. In: C. RIOLFI and V.H. BARZOTTO (editors). *Sem choro nem vela: Cartas aos professores que ainda vão nascer*. São Paulo, Brazil: Paulistana. pp. 189–199.

- BAKHTIN, M. 2003. *Estética da criação verbal*. Trans. P. Bezerra. São Paulo, Brazil: Martins Fontes.
- BANDO, K. 2015. *Wakaru!! Wakaru!! Wakaru!! Shō ronbun & sakubun*. Tōkyō: Shinsei.
- DAY, R.A. 1998. *How to write and publish a scientific paper*. Phoenix: Oryx Press.
- EYA, Y. 2011. “Bunmyakuka” ni motozuku chū jōkyū bunkei gakushū no wakugumi shian. *Akademikku Japanīzu Jānaru* 3:99–107. <http://academicjapanese.jp/dl/ajj/AJJ3_99-107.pdf> Accessed: 26 September 2015.
- HAIKIBUTSU SHIGEN JUNKAN GAKKAI. 2010. *Haikibutsu Shigen Junkan Gakkai Gakkaishi kiji yōryō*. Available from <<http://jsmcwm.or.jp/journal/files/2014/05/editA1.pdf>> Accessed: 2 November 2014.
- HAMADA, M., T. HIRAO, and K. YUI. 1997. *Daigakusei to ryūgakusei no tame no ronbun wākubukku*. Tōkyō: Kuroshio.
- INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CENTER, Hokkaido University. 2015. *Nihongo jugyō gaiyō 2015 nendo dai 2 gaki*. Available from <<https://www.oia.hokudai.ac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Japanese-Language-Course-Guide-Second-Semester-2015.pdf>>. Accessed: 26 September 2015.
- JAPAN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGENCY. 2015. *Japan Science and Technology Information Aggregator, Electronic (J-Stage)*. Available from <<https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/browse/>> Accessed: 4 January 2015.
- JAPAN STUDENT SERVICES ORGANIZATION. 2004. *Ryūgakusei ukeire no gaiyō (heisei 16 nen han)*. Available from <http://www.jasso.go.jp/statistics/intl_student/data04.html> Accessed: 29 May 2015.
- _____. 2015. *Heisei 26 nen do gaikokujin ryūgakusei zaiseki jōkyō chōsa kekka*. Available from <http://www.jasso.go.jp/statistics/intl_student/data14.html> Accessed: 29 May 2015.
- KANKYŌ KAGAKU KAI. 2013. *Kankyō Kagaku Kaishi tōkō kitei*. Available from <<http://ses.or.jp/docs/journal/toukougitei2013.pdf>> Accessed: 12 October 2014.
- KANSAI IKA DAIGAKU GAKKAI. ca. 2014. *Tōkō kitei*. Available from <<http://www3.kmu.ac.jp/igakukai/wt2014.pdf>> Accessed: 11 October 2014.
- KIMOTO, K. 2006. Hōgakukei ronbun no joron ni mirareru bunshō kōsō no bunseki: Minpō, shōhō, chiteki zaisan kenpō kei ronbun o taishō ni. *Senmon Nihongo Kyōiku Kenkyū* 8:19–26. Available from <http://stje.kir.jp/download/08_19.pdf> Accessed: 27 January 2015.
- KINOSITA, K. 2008. *Rikakei no sakubun gijutsu*. Tōkyō: Chūōkōron Shinsha.
- MOTTA-ROTH, D. 1996. Same genre, different discipline: A genre-based study of book reviews in academe. *The ESpecialist* 17(2):99–131. Available from <<http://revistas.pucsp.br/index.php/esp/article/view/9684/7199>>. Accessed: 7 January 2016.

_____. 2001. A construção social do gênero resenha acadêmica. *Trabalhos em Linguística Aplicada* 38: 29–45.

MURAOKA, T. 1999. Nōgakukei nihongo ronbun no “zairyō oyobi hōhō” de mochiirareru bunmatsu hyōgen to bunkei. *Senmon Nihongo Kyōiku Kenkyū* 1:16–23. Available from <http://stje.kir.jp/download/01_16.pdf> Accessed: 26 September 2015.

_____. 2002. Nōgakukei nihongo ronbun no “Kekka oyobi Kōsatsu” ni okeru setsuzoku hyōgen to bunshō tenkai. *Senmon Nihongo Kyōiku Kenkyū* 4:27–34. Available from <http://stje.kir.jp/download/04_27.pdf> Accessed: 25 December 2014.

MURAOKA, T. et al. 2004. Nōgaku kōgaku kei nihongo ronbun no “Shogen” ni okeru setsuzoku hyōgen to ronri tenkai. *Senmon Nihongo Kyōiku Kenkyū* 6:41–48. Available from <http://stje.kir.jp/download/06_41.pdf> Accessed: 25 December 2014.

MURAOKA, T. et al. 2005. Nōgaku kōgaku kei nihongo ronbun no “Shogen” no ronri tenkai bunseki: Keishiki dankai to kōzō yōso no kanten kara. *Senmon Nihongo Kyōiku Kenkyū* 7:21–28. Available from <http://stje.kir.jp/download/07_21.pdf> Accessed: 27 January 2015.

MURAKAMI, Y. 2005. Rikōkei nihonjin gakubusei ni yoru kadai repōto no “Ketsuron” no bunshō kōzō. *Senmon Nihongo Kyōiku Kenkyū* 7:53–58. Available from <http://stje.kir.jp/download/07_53.pdf> Accessed: 25 December 2014.

NIHON EISEI GAKKAI. 2012. *Nihon Eiseigaku Zashi no tōkō kitei*. Available from <<http://www.nacos.com/jsh/main/documents/1208wabun-kitei.pdf>> Accessed: 22 October 2014.

NIHON EIYŌ SHOKURYŌ GAKKAI. 2011. *Nihon Eiyō Shokuryō Gakkaiishi tōkō kitei*. Available from <http://www.jsnfs.or.jp/wp-content/uploads/file/pub/gakkaisi_kitei.pdf> Accessed: 23 October 2014.

NIHON GENSHIRYOKU GAKKAI. 2012. “*Nihon Genshiryoku Gakkai Wabun Ronbunshi*” tōkō kitei. Available from <http://www.aesj.or.jp/publication/080527ronbun_kitei.htm> Accessed: 30 October 2014.

NIHON JINKŌ ZŌKI GAKKAI. 2010. “*Jinkō Zōki*” tōkō kitei. Available from <<http://www.jsao.org/magazine/35.html>> Accessed: 17 October 2014.

NIHON KAISUI GAKKAI. 2014. *Nihon Kaisui Gakkaiishi tōkō kitei*. Available from <<http://www.swsj.org/p6/toukougitei2014.2.pdf>> Accessed: 11 October 2014.

NIHON KŌBUTSU KAGAKU KAI. ca. 2014. “*Ganseki Kōbutsu Kagaku*” tōkō kitei. Available from <<http://jams.la.coocan.jp/gkk2012toko.pdf>> Accessed: 12 October 2014.

NIHON KŌDŌ KEIRYŌ GAKKAI. ca. 2014. *Wabunshi: Kōdō Keiryōgaku tōkō kitei shippitsu yōryō*. Available from <http://www.bsj.gr.jp/journal/index_j.html#kitei> Accessed: 4 November 2014.

NIHON SEITAI IKŌGAKKAI. 2010. “*Seitai Ikōgaku*” tōkō kitei. Available from <<http://jsmbe.org/journal/pdf/tjsmbe-information.pdf>> Accessed: 17 October 2014.

NIHON SUPŌTSU MANEJIMENTO GAKKAI. 2012. “Supōtsu Manejimento Kenkyū” tōkō kitei. Available from <<http://e-jasm.jp/docs/jjism/toukougitei.pdf>> Accessed: 1 November 2014.

NIHON TAIIKU GAKKAI. 2013. “Taiikugaku Kenkyū” tōkō no tebiki (onrain yō). Available from <http://taiiku-gakkai.or.jp/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/2014_09_kenkyu_toukoutebiki.pdf> Accessed: 7 November 2014.

NIHON TOKUSHU KYŌIKU GAKKAI. 2011. *Henshū shippitsu kitei*. Available from <<http://www.jase.jp/toukougitei.html>> Accessed: 22 October 2014.

NITSŪ, N. 2006. Akademikku raitingu ni tsunagaru rīdingu no gakushū. *Akademikku Japanīzu no chōsen*. ed. Masami Kadokura, Yōichi Tsutsui, and Kazuko Miyake. Tōkyō: Hitsuji.

———. 2009. Ronbun no in’yō ni kansuru kisoteki chōsa to in’yō moderu no shian. *Akademikku Japanīzu Jānaru* 1:65–74. Available from <<http://academicjapanese.jp/dl/ajj/65-74-nitsu.pdf>> Accessed: 27 January 2015.

SASAKI, M., K. HOSOI, and K. FUJIO. 2006. *Daigaku de manabu tame no nihongo raitingu: Tanbun kara repōto sakusei made*. Tōkyō: The Japan Times.

SHIZUMA, M. 2010. “-Wa-teiru” in’yōbun no ronbunchū de no shiyō mokuteki. *Akademikku Japanīzu Jānaru* 2:90–100. Available from <<http://academicjapanese.jp/dl/ajj/90-100.pdf>> Accessed: 26 September 2015.

SUWA, K. 2005. *Ronbun o kaitemiyō!* Tōkyō: Kokuseidō.

SWALES, J.M. 1990. *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2004. *Research genres: Explorations and applications*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

SWALES, J.M., and C.B. FEAK. 2004. *Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills*, 2nd edition. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press.

TODAYAMA, K. 2002. *Ronbun no kyōshitsu: Repōto kara sotsuron made*. Tōkyō: NHK Bukkusū.

YAMAGATA UNIVERSITY. ca. 2015. *Yamagata daigaku (Yamagata-ken): Kotoba no sekai o tanken shi, nichijō kaiwa kara koten bungaku sakuhin made manande mimasenka?* Available from <<http://www.yamagata-u.ac.jp/eng/documents/JSP/Nikkensei2014.pdf>> Accessed: 26 September 2015.

ZEN NIHON SHINKYŪ GAKKAI. 2013. *Zen Nihon Shinkyū Gakkai Zasshi tōkō kitei*. Available from <<http://jsam.jp/pdflib/5nNNHY.pdf>> Accessed: 18 October 2014.

Rodrigo Moura Lima de ARAGÃO - M.A. in Japanese Language, Literature and Culture. M.A. in Philology and Portuguese Language. Lecturer in Communication and Research Methods at Faculdade de Tecnologia de Itaquera Professor Miguel Reale, Brazil. E-mail address: aragao_rodrigo@yahoo.com.br