

Oral Presentation

Provisional Title: **Rendaku Dampening and Prefixes**

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Since at least as far back as Nakagawa (1966), it has been noted that certain compound initial elements appear to dampen, or even block, rendaku. It is well-known, for example, that the honorific prefixes *o-*, *go-* and *mi-* (all 御), as well as the prefixes *ma-* 真 and *mai-* 毎, block rendaku completely. Also commented upon in the literature has been the role of the lowest numeral prefixes, *hito-* 一 and *futa-* 二, in severely inhibiting rendaku, as well as the fact that some prefixes, such as *oo-* 大 and the allomorphs *ko-* and *o-* (both 小), appear to have no dampening effect on rendaku whatsoever.

Not examined in the research to date, however, are other prefixes, such as *kata-* 片 or *hacu-* 初, which also dampen rendaku. Yet other prefixes, such as *han-* 半 or *koto-* 事, dampen rendaku, although perhaps not to a statistically significant extent. Still more, for example *te-* 手 or *gyaku-* 逆, do not dampen rendaku at all.

Possible triggers for rendaku dampening include boundness, productivity, optional generation of the mora obstruent, and the existence of homophones with a high level of frequency. Using data from the rendaku database, this presentation will seek to make sense from the confusing behaviour of these and other prefixes.