

Quasi-Final Particle in Japanese Language

A Case Study of Nanchatte and Various-Nanteitshimatte

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Abstract—This paper tries to formulate ideas on requirement of a word that possibly can change its function into quasi-final particle. This research is a descriptive qualitative study with the following steps described. First, the researcher tries to proceed, rewrite, and observe the previous research's findings on each transformation phrase characteristic form, namely *nanchatte* and *various-nanteitshimatte*. Then the researcher finds those characteristics from historical view on how a word transforming happened. Furthermore, the researcher interconnects them to get what is the main characteristic similarity of a quasi-final particle. Finally, formulating ideas of the needed requirement for a word or phrase to change function into quasi-final particle. Afterwards, the researcher found out that the following characteristics of those two words or phrases in the sentence structure [Y quasi-final particle] are common. The results of this study are concluded as: first, Y in front of quasi-final particle is treated as a quote; second, the speaker of Y can be "speaker himself"; third, Y could be "an immediate utterance"; fourth, those words or phrases appear at the end of the sentence and can show the aim of entire sentence; fifth, they take decades to transform from its original form and function.

Keywords—*Japanese language; quasi-final particle; nanchatte; various-nanteitshimatte*

I. INTRODUCTION

Japanese learners generally know final particles like "yo" "ne" "wa" "zo" "ze" "sa" and so on (later it is called "conventional final particle"). However, object of Japanese language research that is very attracting in the recent years is a word or phrase which had been transformed from the earlier function into function as "final particle" [later it is called "quasi-final particle"] among other research on "to" [1], "tte" [2] "shi" [3] "tarishite" [4] "kedo" [5] and so on.

At the beginning of the research as shown in scientific Journal: Nagoya Linguistics, Zuraidah [6] has identified the difference of quasi-final particle compared to conventional final particle. The result based on the previous research is formulated as follows in points a), b), and c). However, the researcher has been identified and re-written with a few corrections and informative additional on point c).

The conventional final particle have common characteristics as follows: a) Has never experienced any changes in form and always occur at the end of the sentence; b) Ending the sentence and once performing the aim of the entire sentence; and c) In the modern Japanese language, it has only its fuction as a final particles (such as "wa" "ze" "zo" and so on) and or as an interjection or emotional expressions (such as "sa" "na" "ne" "yo" and so on).

While common characteristic of the quasi-final particle is: a) The preposition is at the middle of the sentence but then it is used at the end of the sentence; b) Showing the aim of the entire speech without completing phrase/clausal/word; and c) The original function is still used in modern Japanese language, so besides it also served as final particles, it has function as nouns (such as "mono" "koto" "wake" and so on), conjunctive particles (such as "ga" "kedo" "noni" "kara" "te" "shi" and so on), parallel markers (such as "toka" "yara" and so on) and others (such as "to" "teba" "tara" "toui" and so on).

So then, the question rises, how a word or a phrase can transform its form and function into quasi-final particle in modern Japanese language and what are other requirements needed. The problems mentioned above seemed have never been noted in the prior research theories of quasi-final particle yet.

Based on the above ideas, even though each form of a quasi-final particle has its different origin function and essential function but they must have characteristic similarity inside, therefore, the research focuses on several types of case study research. The researcher selected *nanchatte* and *various-nanteitshimatte* as sample of the case study with the consideration: because of its forms, those two linguistic items should be in the middle of the sentence, not at the end of the sentence.

The researcher focuses on research of several quasi-final particles, such as phrase *nanchatte* and *various-nanteitshimatte* (which is considered as the origin of *nanchatte*) as a case study, and try to know how a phrase

transformation happened. Furthermore, the study tries to formulate what requirements are needed for a phrase to become quasi-final particle in the modern Japanese language.

Although both *nanchatte* and *nante* have ever been lifted up by previous researchers, such as Kinjou [7] that viewed from the perspectives of pragmatics, Maynard [8] that investigated the perspectives of discourse analysis, and Suzuki [9] that considered the psychological perspectives and others as research object, however, no researches lifted up from the point of view transforming form and function related to the obtaining of quasi-final particle. Therefore, this paper is aimed to formulate ideas such as words or phrases that have specific requirements or characteristics that can possibly change the function into quasi-final particles.

II. METHODS

The research uses two data sources, namely BCCWJ (Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese), and Aozora Bunko (deploying Full-Text Search System Himawari ver.1.5.7), later they will be called as “BCCWJ” and “Aozora”.

At the earlier research, as shown on the Scientific Journal: Journal of Japanese language and Literature, Zuraidah [10] described the correlation on *nanchatte* on its function as, a) quasi-final particle (*shuujoshiteki youhou*), for example, *saigo ni narimashita ga, tonari no seki no hitora uzee (wara) nanchatte* meaning “at last, people who are sitting right beside me is very noisy (laughing), *nanchatte*.” (BCCWJ: Yahoo!blog); b) noun modifying (*rentai shuushoku youhou*), for example, *hiruchikaku ni ie wo deru musume ni “nanchatte chiizu keeki” wo yakimashita* meaning “I am baking “*nanchatte* cheese cake” for my daughter who goes out from home at almost afternoon.” (BCCWJ: Yahoo!blog); and c) nomina phrase substitute (*meishiku daitai youhou*), for example, *nanchatte wa honkon, shanghai nado de takusan utemasu kara* meaning “Because *nanchatte* is mostly sold in Hongkong, Shanghai, and many more.” (BCCWJ: Yahoo!chiebukuro). While correlation between various-*nanteitshimatte* and *nanchatte* has been described by Zuraidah [11] on Scientific Journal: Jinbungaku Forum.

This research is a descriptive qualitative study with the following steps described. First, the researcher tries to proceed, rewrite, and observe the previous research’s findings that have been explained before on each transformation phrase characteristic form as mentioned above, namely *nanchatte* and various-*nanteitshimatte*. Then the researcher finds those characteristics from historical view on how a word transforming happened. Furthermore, interconnecting them to get what is the main characteristic similarity of a quasi-final particle. Finally, formulating ideas of the needed requirement for a word or phrase to change function into quasi-final particle.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. *Nanchatte*

In its function as quasi-final particle, according to the majority dictionaries of Japan Language, such as Nihon Kokugo Daijiten, *nanchatte* mostly used after someone said

something exaggeratedly, to make impression as if it is a joke, or in Nihon Zokugo Daijiten, *nanchatte* is defined as “I did not really say it” to covering the shame for overstatement or a lie he just said. So, *nanchatte* as shown below may be meant “joke”.

- (1) “Hora, Haruna-san wa, itsuka jibun no omise wo motsu no ga yume da tte itta deshou. Shikin no koto nara Haruki-sama ni tanonde agete mo ii no yo” “Waaaao, sonna koto onegaishitara, atashi mo aijin ni sarechau yo. Kinuka-chan dai ichi aijin de, atashi ga dai ni aijin nanchatte, fufufu”.

“But hey, Haruna-san, did you said that you have a dream that someday would have own shop, right?! About the capital, later I will ask it to Haruki-sama.” “woow, if I ask for it, later I might become his mistress too. Kinuka-chan the first mistress, and I’m the second mistress just kidding, hahaha”

(BCCWJ : “Nureru Seifuku Bijo”, quoted from example (2) in [11])

However, by putting the *nanchatte* by the end of the sentence, the speaker explicitly stated that he has said a difficult utterance or an utterance that is not supposedly to be said. Thus, the researcher considers that “*nanchatte*” is better interpreted as “(whoops) slipped” (and can replace each other with the phrase “*nanteicchatte*” in example (4)).

The characteristics of *nanchatte* as a quasi-final particle can be formulated in 1) - 5) as below [11] (rewritten with a slight improvement and addition of information in point 5))

- 1) The speaker has a “psychological distance” from the previous utterance, and considers the utterance “to be treated as a quote”;
- 2) The previous speech, positioned as “negligent utterance” that is “speech that is reluctant to say, as well as speech that should not be spoken”;
- 3) The speaker of the previous speech is “the speaker himself” (the quota belongs to the speaker himself);
- 4) The prior sentence, is “an immediate utterance “;
- 5) Appears at the end of a sentence, and show the aim of entire sentence.

From the historical point of view of the word, the use of *nanchatte* as a quasi-final particle in a sentence, in the researcher's recorded data appears in 1986 in the example as below, and still used in modern Japanese until now. On the example (2) below, *ninja transfer (ninpou utsushimi)* literally means one of the martial arts technique that requires a ninja to be inside an animal’s skin and masquerade himself as the animal. Therefore, that certain utterance is strange to be spoken unless in particular circumstances such as in a movie scene and in historical drama. By adding *nanchatte* in that utterance, the speaker explicitly marks the excessive speech only as a joke.

- (2) “Umaku itta wa” “Tsugou yoku takushii no senkyaku ga, oretachi ni nita kakkou datta kara sa” Noru to misekakete, kakureta no da. “Ninpou utsushimi! Nanchatte”.

“It works! It’s because the previous passenger of that taxi accidentally looks exactly like us,” “Ninja transfer! Oops slipped”

(BCCWJ : “Hi no kuni shi no kuni”)

The form of *nanchatte* contains the connective particle form “~ *te*” which means the previous utterances, both in the form of smaller sentences or units such as clause or noun (henceforth, in this paper will be called “Y”) is not over and should be followed by clauses (henceforth, in this paper will be referred to as “X”). So, structurally the sentence should be [Y *nanchatte* X].

In fact, in using *nanchatte* as a quasi-final particle, the whole meaning of the sentence [Y *nanchatte*.] has been conveyed without the need for X elements such as “*joudan desu* (just kidding)” “*uso desu* (just a lie)” and so on behind it.

B. Various-Nanteitshimatte

Nanchatte, in the Nihon Kokugo Daijiten dictionary and Saneidou Kokugo Jiten is known as a change of form from *nanteicchatte*, *nadotoitshimatte* and so on. Since these are variations in the form of various-*nanteitshimatte*, henceforth, in this paper will be referred to as “various-*nanteitshimatte*”. The form of various-*nanteitshimatte* also contains the connective particle form “~ *te*” which means the previous speech is not over yet. As in the example (3) below, the phrase various-*nanteitshimatte* is followed by the word “*sumimasen* (sorry)”

- (3) “Busu onna nanteitshimatte sumimasen”

“Sorry I already called (you) ugly woman”

(BCCWJ : “Koi !”, quoted from example (11) in [11])

Like the example above, the common sentence structure of various-*nanteitshimatte* is [Y *nanteitshimatte* X]. The use of various-*nanteitshimatte*, is often found in the expression of the speaker’s remorse and is generally followed by an X which is mostly a contradictory statement (such as an apology or denial) of the previous speech.

The use of various-*nanteitshimatte* as a quasi-final particle, can be found in the example as below.

- (4) Omoshiroi shousetsu ga kakesouna ki ga suru shi, shousetu ga hyouban ni hyouban wo yonde terebi ni mo derareru kamo shirenai. Soshitara, atashi bentsu ga moeta jiken no genba wo toorikakattan desu yo, to sarigenaku iou. Ii shousetsu kaku tameni, atashi wa itsumo chuui bukaku genjitu wo kansatsu shite irundesu, nanteicchatte. Fufufu.

I think I can write interesting novels, and maybe (my) novels will become famous and (I) can appear on television. Then, naturally I would say, I was passing by the scene when the benz was burning. To write a good novel, I always observe the reality carefully. (whoops) I blurted out. Hehehe.

(BCCWJ : “Shinigamimura no sanbyakusai tanteidan”, quoted from example (14) in [11])

Example (4) above shows the scene of a speaker wishing for what he would say if he was later interviewed by a television station. As stated by Zuraidah [11], this is closely related to the word forming of various-*nanteitshimatte*, namely *nante* whose function is to quote the previous speech, and *itshimau* which functions states that the speech should not be spoken.

Like the example (4) above, although there is no element of X (apology or denial) that follows behind the various-*nanteitshimatte*, but the purpose of the whole sentence, namely can be conveyed with [Y *nanteicchatte*].

Furthermore, the characteristics of various-*nanteitshimatte* as quasi-final particle are formulated in 6) - 10) below [11] (with a slight improvement and addition of information in point 10)).

- 6) The speaker has a “psychological distance” from the previous utterance, and considers the utterance “to be treated as a quote”;
- 7) Previous speeches are positioned as “negligent utterances”, namely “speeches that are reluctant to be spoken, as well as speech that should not be spoken”;
- 8) The speaker of the previous speech is “the speaker himself” or “the listener” or “the third parties”;
- 9) The prior sentence, are “a utterances that have been spoken” or “an immediate utterances”;
- 10) If it appears at the end of a sentence, can show the aim of entire sentence.

From the historical point of view of words, based on the researcher’s research data, the form of the various-*nanteitshimatte* first appeared in 1931 (in the form of *nanteitshimatta*), in the example as below.

- (5) “Okuni no hito” nante itshimatta no sa
I already said “people (from your) country”

(Aozora : “Ahen wo kitsumu bishounen”)

So it can be said, to bring forth a new form of *nanchatte* in the 80s with its new function as a quasi-final particle, it takes about 50 years.

IV. CONCLUSION

After formulating the characteristics of the two case studies of phrase transformation, namely *nanchatte*, and various-*nanteitshimatte*, it can be concluded that the characteristic similarities that are common to all two (in the sentence structure [Y quasi-final particle.]) are, first, Y in front of quasi-final particle is treated as a quote; second, the speaker of Y can be “speaker himself”; third, Y could be “an immediate utterance”; fourth, those words and phrases appear at the end of the sentence and can show the aim of entire sentence; fifth, they take decades to transform from its original form and function.

In other words, the researcher argues, in modern Japanese language, a word or a phrase will be more easily transformed into a quasi-final particle if it meets the requirements above.

So, do not rule out the possibility, other words and phrases that have the characteristics mentioned above, also have the opportunity to transform into a new quasi-final particle in the future.

This study contributes to the Japanese linguistic field as the starting step to formulate ideas of the needed requirement for a word or phrase to change function into quasi-final. In next study, correlation between *mitaina* on its function as a “quasi-final particle” (*shuujoshiteki youhou*)” with “noun-modifying” (*rentai shuushoku youhou*)”, and also historical view on how transforming *mitaina* happened, will be comprehensively discussed on the different journal.

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