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Functional Variety of the Particle *shi* in Japanese Conversation with Particular Reference to Kansai Dialects

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I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family.

ABSTRACT

Conjunctions in Japanese are usually described as a class of particles which function to link clauses. Recently many so-called conjunctions can be found at sentence-final position exhibiting characteristics similar to those of a sentence-final particle. Sentence-final particles in Japanese are a type of particle used at utterance-final position, and indicate a speaker's attitude, emotions, feelings or strategy reflecting the speaker's stance towards the content of the information being uttered. In other words, they exhibit a variety of discourse-pragmatic functions. The focus of this study has been to examine the conjunction *shi* at sentence-final position in naturally occurring conversations observing any functional change/shift away from the traditional usage with particular reference to Kansai dialects.

The use of sentence-final *shi* in informal Japanese dialogue was assessed by collecting examples which occurred in conversations of native speakers. These provided data from a cross-section of people, ages, predominantly residing in the Kansai area. The data was analysed according to a number of criteria including the response of the interlocutor, the extent inference is necessary to understand the intended message, and the pragmatic effects caused by sentence-final *shi.*

This study establishes that there is an emergence of a new usage of *shi* in Japan from the traditional conjunction (clause linking particle) to that of a sentence-final particle. The traditional usage has not disappeared but coexists with the new usage. Previous studies have suggested sentence-final *shi* is associated with a negative tone; while for the most part, *shi* at sentence-final position expresses the speaker's observation with a negative stance, there are times observed in this study when *shi* is used in ways that do not necessarily express the speaker's negative view. This represents a significant new finding of the study. The observations made in this study are based on Kansai dialects, and whether they are true of standard Japanese is beyond the scope of this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS iv

LIST OF TABLES vii

ABBREVIATIONS viii

NOTE ON ROMANISATION ix

NOTE ON TRANSCRIPTION AND ANALYTIC CONVENTIONS ix

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS x

CHAPTER 1 1

INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Purpose of the Study 1

1.2 Review of the Literature 5

1.3 Significance of the Study 7

1.4 Research Approach 8

1.5 The Structure of the Thesis 9

CHAPTER 2 10

JAPANESE COMMUNICATION STYLE 10

2.1 Communication Style 10

2.2 Language of the Youth 14

2.3 Tanabe's Study on Gyaru ('Gal') Language 16

CHAPTER 3 17

SENTENCE-FINAL PARTICLES AND CONJUNCTIONS 17

KARA* and *KEDO 17

3.1 Sentence-Final Particles 18

3.1.1 Particles ne and yo 20

3.2 Similar Phenomena Found in Conjunctions....21

3.2.1 Iguchi's Study on kara....22

3.2.2 Park's Study on kedo....26

3.2.3 Nakayama and Ichihashi-Nakayama's Study on kedo....27

CHAPTER 4....30

TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL FACETS OF *SHI*....30

4.1 Existing Definitions and Discussions of the Function of shi....30

4. 2 Regional Differences....40

4.3 Non-traditional Facets of shi....42

CHAPTER 5....47

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODOLOGY....47

5.1 Conversation Analysis....47

5.2 Data Collection Methodology....48

5.3 Participants....52

5.4 Conversation Analysis Methodology....54

5.5 Survey Methodology....55

5.5.1 Survey Materials....55

5.5.2 Survey Participants....55

CHAPTER 6....57

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA....57

6.1 Analysis of Data....58

6.2 General Results....106

CHAPTER 7....109

CONCLUSION....109

REFERENCES....113

APPENDIX 1: COPY OF SURVEY 122

APPENDIX 2: TRANSLATION OF THE SURVEY 129

LIST OF TABLES

3.1.1	Maynard's Frequency of Sentence-Final Forms in Three-Minute Segments of Conversation among Twenty Pairs	21
5.2	Data Information for Conversations	50-51
5.2	Data Information for KBS Kyoto Radio Station Show	51
5.3	Speakers' Biological Information	53

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in the analysis of the data.

ACC	ACCusative case particle (*o*)
CAUS	CAUSative
COND	CONDitional form
CONJ	CONJuctive particle
COP	COPula (*da*)
DAT	DATive particle (*ni*)
GEN	GENitive particle (*no*)
INFL	INFLection
LAT	LATive particle (*ni*)
NOM	NOMinative case marker (*ga*)
NOMI	Nominaliser
NEG	NEGative
PASS	PASSive
PAST	PAST tense
SFP	Sentence-Final Particle
TOP	TOPic Marker
Q	Question Marker
QUOT	QUOTative particle

NOTE ON ROMANISATION

A hybrid system followed by many Japanese linguists for romanization is used in this thesis for the author's Japanese data and examples. Consonants follow the Hepburn system, but vowel length is indicated by doubling the vowel. However quotations of examples from other authors will retain the romanisation of the original.

NOTE ON TRANSCRIPTION AND ANALYTIC CONVENTIONS

The transcription system uses standard English orthographic symbols, together with some additional symbols and follows Conversation Analytic Standards (e.g. Atkinson and Heritage, 1984). Quotations of examples from other authors will retain the analytical method of the original.

When all or part of an utterance, or the speaker identification, is in parentheses, this indicates uncertainty on the transcriber's part, but represents a likely possibility. Empty parentheses indicate that something is being said, but no clarification could be achieved. If the empty parentheses are where speakers are identified, it indicates that no identification of the speaker could be achieved. Full stops indicate the end of an utterance. Punctuation in examples from other authors will retain the form of the original. All conversations are numbered according to the order in which they present in the chapter, even if this differs from the numbering of their original source.

The grammatical analysis of the particle *shi* is not included in the examples presented. Rather, ***shi*** is presented in italics and in bold font.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Study

This thesis examines the functional variety of the Japanese conjunction *shi*[1] in naturally occurring conversations with particular reference to Japanese spoken in the Kansai area. Traditionally, the conjunction *shi* occurs at clause-final position and connects two clauses in a sentence. According to Makino and Tsutsui (1986, p. 395), the conjunction *shi* is used to indicate the English conjunctive 'and' in an emphatic way by linking two or more clauses. Depending on the context of the sentence Makino and Tsutsui state that *shi* can also be translated as 'and what's more', or 'not only, but also', and 'so'. Their example *koko wa natsu wa atsui shi, fuyu wa samui desu* ('Here it is hot in summer, and what's more, it's cold in the winter.') is an example of the traditional usage of the particle *shi*. However, personal experience suggests that there are occasions in spontaneous Japanese conversation where the conjunction *shi* occurs at the end of the sentence, in utterance-final and sentence-final position exhibiting characteristics similar to that of a sentence-final particle. Japanese sentence-final particles (SFPs) are a type of particle which occurs in sentence-final or utterance-final position. An utterance-final particle is a particle found in final position of a complete unit of speech in spoken language bounded by breaths or pauses but which does not have to be grammatical. There are a number of SFPs in Japanese and they have been described in many ways, as signalling the speaker's sentiments (McGloin, 1990), conveying the speaker's attitude and judgment (Oishi, 1985), and to express the attitude of the speaker to the interlocutor (Cook, 1990). More detailed discussion of SFPs and conjunctions can be found in Chapter 3.

This study will examine instances of conversational data, including data from a radio talk show, KBS Kyoto, that carry the conjunction *shi* at sentence-final or utterance-final position. An utterance can be any vocally produced sound, but a sentence can be either written or spoken. Simply, a sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete

[1] In some sources *shi* is also described as a conjunctive particle.