

LUND UNIVERSITY

Centre for Languages and Literature – Japanese Studies

JAP 152

HT 2006

The conjectural and hortative *bee*
- *from dialectal particle to stereotypic marker* -

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Abstract

The Japanese conjectural and hortative particle *bee* is the main characteristic of Tohoku dialect, and has been rigorously studied by Tamakake Gen at Tohoku University. This thesis presents for the first time in English his semantic categorization of *bee*, while complementing this with a detailed description of the particle's grammatical properties. The stereotypic *bee*, as can be seen in the *Final Fantasy X International* videogame, is also introduced, and argued to co-exist with the dialectal *bee* as a separate entity from it. Through the assistance of an informant from the Tohoku area's capital, Sendai, the inconsistencies between Tamakake's account and her perception of *bee* are then pinpointed. These are discussed and explained through the presence of the stereotypic *bee* in Sendai, and the argument is made that the dialectal *bee* is about to be consumed by its own stereotypic cousin.

Conventions and abbreviations

Romanization

This thesis uses a modified version of the Hepburn system of romanization. Instead of Macrons, double letters are used to indicate long vowels, as in for example *yuubinposuto* (mailbox). Geminate consonants are transcribed as in *futta* (fell), with two consonants.

As for personal and place names, the conventional spelling is used. For example, *Toohoku* is written Tohoku throughout the thesis.

Glossing and abbreviations

The glossing system basically follows the Leipzig Glossing Rules (LGR), and the following abbreviations are used:

ADV	-	adverbial	HOR	-	hortative
CONJ	-	conjunctural	NOM	-	nominative
COP	-	copula	NPAST	-	nonpast
DAT	-	dative	PAST	-	past
FP	-	final particle	QP	-	question particle
GEN	-	genitive	TOP	-	topic
GER	-	gerund			

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1. Introduction

1.1 *The Topic*

Bee is a dialectal modal marker that has been famous as the main characteristic of Tohoku dialect from sometime during the Edo period (1603-1867), up to this day. Tohoku dialect is spoken not only in the Tohoku region (Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Akita, Yamagata and Fukushima prefecture), but can also be heard in some regions of Hokkaido and in the northern parts of Niigata prefecture. It should also be noted that the marker itself, while strongly associated with Tohoku dialect, makes appearances in dialects of the Kanto region (Gunma prefecture, southwestern parts of Tochigi prefecture, Saitama prefecture, parts of Kanagawa prefecture and southern Chiba prefecture) and the Chubu region (Shizuoka prefecture).

My first encounter with *bee* was not through conversation with a speaker of Tohoku dialect or any other, but rather through the Japanese subtitling of the English dialogue in a popular videogame. During my exchange studies a year or so later in Sendai, the capital of the Tohoku region, I came in contact with *bee* once gain. Soon I found myself in the somewhat uncomfortable situation of making liberal use of *bee* in conversations with my Japanese friends, while not at all being able to give a satisfying semantic or grammatical account of it when confronted. This sparked the idea of focusing my thesis around exactly such an account, with hope of simultaneously being able to map out the differences if any between the *bee* seen in the videogame and the *bee* used by people who have it as a part of their dialect.

These dialects are however not only quite numerous, but also appear to be different

in how they make use of *bee*.¹ Focusing on a specific dialect seemed necessary, and because I with relative ease could obtain material on the local dialect from Tohoku University in Sendai, where I also had made many friends who could act as potential informants, I decided to conduct my studies around Sendai City dialect.

The purpose of this thesis is twofold. Firstly, a detailed account based on research from Tohoku University of the semantic categories of use and grammatical properties of *bee* as it appears in Sendai City dialect is given for the first time in English. The differences between this description and how *bee* is used in daily conversation by a young female Sendai City resident are also pointed out. Secondly, I will show how *bee* exists as a stereotypic marker used as a part of role language in videogames, literature and other media. Differences between this marker and the dialectal particle are discussed, and the idea is presented that the dialectal *bee* could possibly be about to be consumed by its stereotypic relative.

1.2 *Data & Methodology*

The main source of information for the description of dialectal *bee* has been the extensive work done by Tamakake Gen, all of which and more he kindly supplied me with personally. His two articles on *bee* in Sendai City dialect (1999, 2002), the one concerning *bee* in Nakaniidachoo (1998), and a more general discussion about dialectal particles in this area (2006), are the foundation upon which my work rests. Of considerable importance were also Takigawa's article about difference in *bee*-usage between age groups in Nakaniidachoo (Takigawa 1998), the comprehensive description of Japanese dialects by Ooishi and Kamimura (Ooishi/Kamimura 1976), and of course

¹ For detailed discussions on regional variations, refer to for example Ooishi/Kamimura (1976:215-216), Martin (2004:609) and Takigawa (1998:72-74).

Martin's monumental *A Reference Grammar of Japanese* (Martin 2004), without question the best that exists in English.

By studying the above material I was able to gain a firm grasp of the dialectal *bee*. Since Tamakake had already very carefully mapped out its semantic properties, I simply present his categorization as described by him, along with some of the illustrative example sentences found in his work. Tamakake also gives a grammatical description, but as it was far too limited in its scope to be sufficient for this work, a more expansive one was created. For this, numerous sessions with my informant, a 22-year old female from Sendai, and her patience with me and my questions, cannot be overestimated. With her help I created additional examples and descriptions that, while true to Tamakake's description, are designed to offer the reader a more complete understanding of the particle than his original work does. In some cases, when my informant did not agree with Tamakake's account, I was very fortunate to be able to acquire examples and explanations through e-mail correspondence with the author personally. Naturally, my informant's disagreements were also carefully noted and are discussed in a separate section.

As for the latter part of the thesis, it relies heavily on the appearance of *bee* in the Japanese subtitles of Squaresoft's *Final Fantasy X International* videogame. Analyzed using Kinsui's work on role language (Kinsui 2005) and Takenami's scintillating observations regarding how Tohoku dialect is used when translating foreign speech into Japanese (Takenami 1990), the particle here is found to be stereotypic rather than dialectal.

The stereotypic *bee* is used to convey certain things about the speakers' personalities rather than hint the reader as to where they are from, and also has slightly different

grammatical properties than its equivalent in Sendai City dialect. While discussing these with my informant, I learned that she uses both the dialectal form and the stereotypic form in her everyday life. The possible consequences of this are discussed, bringing up additional examples from the material presented so far, as well as incorporating Ball's analysis of how the 'in group' and 'out group' relationship between speaker and listener affects their use of dialect forms (Ball 2004). Lastly, certain conclusions are drawn from these discussions, and predications for the future are made.

A great help throughout were Larm's *Modality in Japanese* (Larm 2006) and Trudgill's *A Glossary of Sociolinguistics* (Trudgill 2003). The former proved an indispensable looking glass through which to study this topic, while the latter was a great help in understanding the sociolinguistic thought and terminology.

2. The dialectal *bee*

2.1 *Meaning*

Bee comes from *beshi* and its attributive form *beki*.² Through the dropping of *k*, a phenomenon that is familiar from for example Kansai dialect, *beki* becomes *bei* and takes the pronunciation *bee*. *Bee* can also be shortened to *be*, and both these pronunciations are commonly used (Martin 2004:608-609). This does not, however, mean that *bee* is a dialectal equivalent of *beshi/beki*, nor of the colloquial *beki*.

Martin explains that *bee* is a conjectural particle that is a dialectal equivalent of *daroo* (Martin 2004:944). Mention is also given of a hortative function, but it is said to be limited only to certain dialects and not recognized as a part of common usage (Martin 2004:609). If the latter is true, then Sendai City dialect is one of those certain few. While not touching upon what is common usage and what is not, Tamakake, in his thorough semantic study of the *bee* in Sendai City dialect, defines it as a particle with both a conjectural and a hortative use (Tamakake 1999, 2002). Further, he splits these two uses into three and four semantic sub-categories respectively:

conjectural use

- i *conjectural*
- ii *affirmative*
- iii *affirmative-demanding*

hortative use

- i *volitional*
- ii *offering*
- iii *persuading (inclusive)*

² While Martin describes *bee* as derived from the literary adjective *beshi*, it seems more common in Japanese research to speak of *bee* together with the *beshi* of classical Japanese, rather than the modern, literary one. Looking at for example Takigawa's account of the development of the dialectal variation *taga-gan-be*, it seems obvious that the latter would be more accurate (Takigawa 1998:82).

When asked to explain the meaning of *bee* in Sendai City dialect, my informant says that it can correspond to either the conjectural particle *daroo* or the hortative suffix *-oo* of standard Japanese. She opposes Martin's claim that it does not see wide use as a hortative among Japanese dialects.

In the following sections, a close examination of the meaning of the Sendai *bee* will be conducted, based upon the seven semantic sub-categories defined by Tamakake. Tamakake's definition will be given for each category, followed by one of his example sentences accompanied by a brief explanation.

Note that when Sendai City dialect *bee* follows verbs that end with the *ru* in nonpast form, it changes from *bee* to *pee* and the *ru* is replaced with a doubled consonant. This applies *both* to vowel verbs (so-called *ru*-verbs) and consonant verbs (so-called *u*-verbs) that end with *ru*. In other words,

- (1) mi-ru be
 look-NPAST HORT
 'Let's look.'

becomes

- (2) mip- -pe
 look-NPAST HORT
 'Let's look.'

This will be seen in many of the examples presented below.

2.1.1 *Conjectural meanings of bee*

In this section the sub-categories of *bee* as a conjectural particle, as defined by Tamakake (Tamakake 1999:44-46, Tamakake 2002:26-27)), will be examined. These are *conjectural*, *affirmative* and *affirmative-demanding*.

i *conjectural*

The speaker can not confirm something as true, but based upon his own subjective feelings makes a judgment about it (Tamakake 1999:44).

- (3) Kono tokee wa taka-i be naa
This watch TOP expensive-NPAST CONJ FP
'I suppose this watch is quite expensive.'

The speaker does not know the watch to be expensive, but makes a judgment based on his own subjective feelings that it is. *Be* can here be translated as 'I suppose', 'I guess' or 'I think'. It could be replaced with *daroo* without changing the meaning.

ii *affirmative*

The speaker can not confirm something as true, but based upon his own subjective feelings makes a judgment about it. Further, he seeks confirmation from the listener whether it is true or not (Tamakake 1999:45).

- (4) Hitorigurashi Ø sabishi-i bee
living alone TOP lonely-NPAST CONJ
'Living alone is lonely, isn't it?'

The speaker does not know whether living alone is lonely (to the listener) or not, but makes a subjective judgment about it. Further, he wants the listener to confirm whether his assumption was correct or not. *Bee* can here be translated as ‘isn’t it?’. It could be replaced with *daroo* without changing the meaning.

iii *affirmative-demanding*³

The speaker *can* confirm something as true, and his judgment about it is *not* based on his feelings. However, he wants to *make* the listener confirm it as true. (Tamakake 2002:26)

- (5) Akko sa yuubinposuto ga ap- -pe
over there TOP mailbox NOM is-NPAST CONJ
‘Over there is a mailbox, isn’t it?’

The speaker can confirm the existence of the mailbox over there, because it is right in front of his eyes. The speaker could say ‘Over there is a mailbox!’ instead, using for example the final particle *yo*. In category ii he does not have enough information to make such a statement. As such, *be* may here too be translated as ‘isn’t it?’, but rather than requesting a confirmation of whether the mailbox is actually there or not, the speaker expects the listener to answer him with something along the lines of “Oh yes, I see it now.” It could be replaced with *daroo* without changing the meaning.

³ ii and iii do not appear as separate categories until Tamakake 2002.

2.1.2 Hortative meanings of *bee*

In this section the sub-categories of *be* as a hortative particle, as defined by Tamakake (Tamakake 1999:39-44), will be examined. These are *volitional*, *proposing*, *inviting (inclusive)* and *inviting (exclusive)*.

i *volitional*

The speaker will, in order to realize something desired by the speaker, perform an active action with which the listener has no involvement. (Tamakake 1999:40)

- (6) Ore mo sorosoro gakkoo sa ig-u be
I TOP soon school to go-NPAST HORT
'(I think) it is time for me to go to school.'

The speaker expresses his intent to go to school; an action the listener is not involved in. *Be* can here be translated as 'I think I'll do it'. It could be replaced with *-oo* without changing the meaning.

ii *offering*⁴

The speaker will, in order to realize something desired by the speaker, perform an active action that requires the listener to fulfill a certain condition in order for it to be possible. (Tamakake 1999:40)

- (7) Ore na kashi-te yap- -pe
I GEN lend-GER do-NPAST HORT
'Let me lend you mine.'

⁴ In Tamakake 1998, i and ii are not separate categories.

The speaker will lend his item, but the listener must agree to the condition of being lent it in order for this to be possible. *Be* can here be translated as ‘let me do it’. It could be replaced with *-oo* without changing the meaning.

iii *persuading (inclusive)*

The speaker and the listener will, in order to realize something desired by the speaker, perform an active action. (Tamakake 1999:41-42)

- (8) Sukoshi suwatte yasu-n be
a little sit-GER rest-NPAST HORT
‘Let’s sit and rest for a while.’

The speaker proposes that he and the listener should sit and rest for a little while, and they will both perform this action. *Be* can here be translated as ‘let’s do it’. It could be replaced with *-oo* without changing the meaning.

iv *persuading (exclusive)*

The listener, but *not* the speaker, will, in order to realize something desired by the speaker, perform an active action. (Tamakake 1999:43)

- (9) Chotto shizuka ni sup- -pe
little quiet DAT do-NPAST HORT
‘Let’s keep it down a little.’

The speaker expresses his desire that the speech volume should be lowered, but the active action is performed only by the listener. *Be* can here too be translated as ‘let’s do it’, or perhaps even the imperative ‘do it’. It could be replaced with *-oo* without changing the meaning.

2.2 *Grammatical Properties*

This section will give an account of the grammatical properties of the dialectal *bee*. Because these are very similar to those of the conjectural particle *daroo*, Larm’s (2006:112-116) section on that particle was used as a template for this description. While *bee* also can be used as a hortative particle, because of the aforementioned grammatical similarities to *daroo* it appears as a conjectural particle in all the examples given below. Comparative examples with *daroo* will also be given when deemed contributive.

Bee follows the nonpast (as seen in examples above) and past form of verbs as well as adjectives:

(10) Yuki Ø fut-ta be
 Snow NOM fall-PAST CONJ
 ‘It snowed, didn’t it?’

(11) Samu-katta be
 cold-PAST CONJ
 ‘It was cold, wasn’t it?’

Bee can be followed by the final particles *sa*, *yo* and *na*, but not *zo* or *ze*. As for the final particle *ne*, it does not feel as natural to use as *na*, but is allowed (Tamakake 2006:e-mail correspondence, Martin 2004:944). Consider the following sentence, provided by Tamakake:

- (12) Ano hito Ø kai-ta hon danba,
 that person NOM write-PAST book if,
 omoshiro-i be ne
 interesting-NONPAST CONJ FP
 'I suppose if it is a book that person wrote, it should be interesting – don't you think?'

Unlike *daroo*, *bee* does not follow directly after a noun or a nominal adjective stem.

In these cases, an intact copula is required. Compare the following:

- (13) Sore wa hana Ø daroo
 that TOP flower COP.NPAST CONJ
 'I suppose that is a flower.'

- (14) Sore wa hana da be
 that TOP flower COP.NPAST CONJ
 'I suppose that is a flower.'

Bee also needs the copula in cases where *daroo* can appear on its own, such as when:

- (15) Yuki Ø fup- -pe
 snow NOM fall-NPAST CONJ
 'It will snow, don't you think?'

is answered in a manner such as:

(16) Daroo ne
CONJ FP
'I suppose (that it will snow).'

(17) Da bee
COP.NPAST CONJ
'I suppose (that it will snow).'

However, after the past form of the copula, *daroo* and *bee* behave identically:

(18) Taihen dat-ta daroo/be
troublesome COP-PAST CONJ
'That was troublesome, wasn't it?'

Bee may also be used in dependent clauses, followed by connective particles such as *keredo* or *ga*. Tamakake provides the following sentence, stressing the importance of noting that while *bee* might be easy to confuse as a final particle, this proves that like *daroo* it is not one (Tamakake 1999:38).

(19) Kyoo wa tsukare Ø dep- -pe gara
today TOP fatigue NOM come out-NPAST CONJ because
hae-gu kaet-te ii
early-ADV return home-GER good
'I suppose you feel tired today, so you may go home early.'

2.3 *Disputes regarding the grammatical properties*

While helping with the construction of the account of the grammatical properties of *bee* in Sendai City dialect, my informant discovered two key points that left her in disagreement.

For one, she agrees that *bee* can be used together with final particles *sa*, *yo* and *na*, but, contrary to Tamakake (and Martin), she claims firmly that *bee* is not be used together with the final particle *ne*. She deems even example (12) incorrect, supplied by Tamakake through e-mail correspondence when told about her disagreement. This is, she explains, because the confirming function of *ne* is sufficiently contained within *bee* itself, and is achieved through intonation alone.

Secondly, again contrary to Tamakake, she will not allow me to make sentences like (19), where *bee* is put in a dependent clause. It should be noted that Tamakake supplies this example exclusively to prove that *bee* is not a final particle like many people seem to believe, why my informant's attitude towards the example perhaps can be explained as supportive of the theory that *bee* is actually changing towards becoming a final particle. Both Tamakake and Takigawa make mention of this theory, but question the validity of it (Tamakake 1999:38, Takigawa 1998).

2.4 *Summary*

In this chapter, the dialectal *bee* as seen in Sendai City dialect was carefully examined with regards to meaning and grammar.

Looking at the semantic categories of Tamakake, we noted that *daroo* basically could take the place of *bee* in all the conjectural categories, while the hortative suffix *-oo* could replace *bee* in all the hortative categories. Doing this would not cause any change in meaning to the sentences. Thus, it seems safe to state that the *bee* of Sendai City dialect does not differ in meaning at all from its claimed equivalents in standard Japanese.

As for grammatical properties, we note that *bee* behaves essentially the same way

grammatically as *daroo*, except when appearing after the nonpast form of the copula. It should also be remembered that while *bee* might appear strikingly similar to a final particle, it is not one since it can be placed in dependent clauses. There is, however, a theory that *bee* is becoming a final particle, and it would appear as if my informant could already be thinking of it as one, as she disagreed with this use. She also disagreed with using *bee* together with *ne*, even when confronted with an example sentence provided by Tamakake.

3. The non-dialectal *bee*

3.1 *The stereotypic bee*

Consider the following sentence, cited from the popular videogame *Final Fantasy X International*:

- (20) It-te mi-ru be
 go-GER see-NPAST HORT
 ‘Let’s go and see!’

The spoken dialogue in this game is in English, while Japanese subtitles appear to aid the audience of the game, who are Japanese, in comprehending said dialogue. Given above is a phrase uttered by the character Wakka, and the Japanese subtitle for this utterance.

The subtitling of Wakka, a character with a primitive mind but a big heart, residing on a paradise island far away from any of the larger settlements in the game world, uses the particle *bee* abundantly. The Japanese used aside from this particle, however, is hardly very dialectal. For example, in the above sentence, the *ru*-change of Sendai City dialect, noted in (2), is absent. So too are the characteristics of other Japanese dialects in which *bee* sees use, such as the change of the verb’s *ru* to *n* before *bee* in for example Tochigi prefecture. The same is true for all other sentences in the translation containing the particle.

What we have here is not a dialectal version of *bee*, but a stereotypic one, used as a part of role language. The definition of role language, as given by Kinsui (2005)⁵, is:

⁵ Kinsui has also written a book on this subject, (Kinsui, S. (2003) *Baacharu Nihongo: Yakuwarigo*

When hearing a certain way of word-usage (like vocabulary, wording, turns of phrase, intonation etc) one can call to mind a certain image of a person (age, sex, job, class, era, appearance, looks, personality etc), or, when one is presented with a certain image of a person, one can call to mind the word-usage that person would be sure to use, we call that word-usage ‘Role Language’.

In other words, *bee* is used here to convey certain things about the character Wakka, rather than imply that he is from the Tohoku area. Kinsui also touches upon the particle *bee* in his lecture, listing it as used in the role language of country people. He illustrates with:

- (21) Ame sa fur-u be
rain NOM fall-NPAST CONJ
'It will rain, don't you think?'

Noteworthy here too is the absence of any change to the *ru*-ending verb, similar to what could be seen in (20).

Bee, as mentioned in 1.1, is strongly associated with the dialect of the Tohoku area. Kinsui explains that this dialect is used as a part of role language when translating Afro-American Accent, giving as an example the Japanese translation by Okubo from 1953 of the book *Gone with the Wind*.

Another example is the translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, mentioned by Takenami as he discusses the use of Tohoku dialect in translations to Japanese in a short article.

no Nazo (Virtual Japanese: Enigma of the Role Language). Tokyo: Iwanami Publishers). Sadly, this came to my attention too late for it to be acquirable in time for this thesis.

Takenami observes that black people with mixed parentage, well brought up, with good manners and clean looks, and who can read and write well, are translated using standard Japanese, leaving Tohoku dialect only for the translation of the rough, ill-informed, illiterate, badly brought up people without manners, such as the black slaves (Takenami 1990:183). A conversation quoted from the book to illustrate this contains the particle *bee*.

Another example Takenami finds in the newspaper Yomiuri Shinbun (issue 1989-09-26), one of the five national newspapers of Japan. Here, a man living in the deserts of Niger is quoted in translation. Incidentally, this quote contains *bee* too:

- (22) Araa no okurimono da be ka
 Allah GEN gift COP-NPAST CONJ QP
 'Is this a gift from Allah?'

Takenami, born in Sendai, notes that the Tohoku dialect found in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, on TV and in newspapers, is a bundled, simplified version meant for everyone in Japan to understand. Certain well-known features are preserved, but it is hardly the dialect he is familiar with from home. (Takenami 1990:182-183)

In the case of Wakka, he fits in well with the image of an ill-informed, illiterate person without much in the way of manners. Comparing the translation of his dialogue to that of the black slaves in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* or *Gone with the Wind*, it seems the Tohoku dialect has been simplified even further in his case, perhaps remaining only as its characteristic particle *bee*. While his utterances are fully understandable for the wide Japanese audience intended to play the game, the particle *bee* almost single-handedly seems to keep the role language function of Tohoku dialect intact.

3.2 *The existence of stereotypic bee in Sendai*

In section 3.1 we introduced the concept of a stereotypic *bee*, free of the *ru*-changes affecting the Sendai City dialect and others. The lack of *ru*-change is not, however, limited to the world of translation and its role language. If a speaker from for example Tokyo, an area that does not have the particle present as part of its dialectal heritage, uses *bee* in a sentence, it would most likely not be subject to *ru*-change. This is of course because the *bee* used by a person from Tokyo is probably the stereotypic *bee*, not the dialectal one. This speaker would use the particle, perhaps rather jokingly, to apply the role language function of Tohoku dialect to his utterance. He might not have any relation to anyone from that area, but can mimic what he has observed on TV, in a book or newspaper or while playing a videogame.

However, my informant notes that she and her friends use *both* the changed form *and* the unchanged form in everyday conversation. If taking for example the *ru*-ending verb *miru* (to see), she says that the changed form *mippe* sounds more friendly and implies a more intimate relationship with the listener than the unchanged form *miru be* does, which she would describe as more or less neutral in that aspect. As such, she is inclined to use *mippe* when speaking to a person belonging to her in-group (*uchi*), and *miru be* to a person belonging to her out-group (*soto*).

Ball (2004), shows how a speaker in a conversation with two people uses Kansai dialect with one of them and Standard form with the other, and argues that the *uchi* and *soto* stances in this situation are maintained through the constant shifting of these two forms. Considering the similarities between Ball and my informant's description of how she uses *bee* given above, it could perhaps be argued that a stereotypic *bee* (without

ru-change) exists alongside a dialectal *bee* (with *ru*-change) in Sendai, and that the stereotypic *bee* is in fact used as a separate entity that is considered by the people there (or, at least the youth) as more of a Standard form than a part of local dialect.

If we consider this, we could possibly use it to explain her disagreement with parts of the grammatical properties of *bee* according to Tamakake (see 2.3). The simplified, stereotypic *bee* could be affecting the properties of its more complex, dialectal version, or perhaps even be on the verge of consuming it fully. This would be called a change from below, a linguistic change “which take[s] place in a community below the level of conscious awareness, that is, when speakers are not consciously aware, unlike with changes from above, that such [a change is] taking place.” (Trudgill 2003:21).

3.3 *The hortative among young people*

As mentioned in 2.1, Martin states that the hortative use of dialectal *bee* is limited only to certain dialects, and that the common usage is as a conjectural particle (Martin 2004:609). My informant opposes this statement, saying it feels as natural to use *bee* as a hortative particle as it feels to use it as a conjectural one. This could be explained by considering (20), where it seems as if the stereotypic *bee* can be used as a hortative rather effortlessly. This example, along with various others found in that material, is not in line with Martin’s description, and it appears as if we can see my informant as being affected by the stereotypic *bee* here. We note, however, that Tamakake gives a detailed account for a hortative use, and while he deals with the occurrence of *bee* in one specific dialect only, my informant is a speaker of this specific dialect. It can therefore not yet be said that the stereotypic *bee* has influenced the dialectal hortative in Sendai. However, we must not assume Tamakake’s description of the dialectal hortative to be

unproblematic.

In his study of difference in *bee* usage between age groups in Nakaniidachoo, a town close to Sendai, Takigawa notes that one of his young informants struggled to make sense of a sentence meant to convey ‘I think I’ll do it’ through the hortative use of *bee*. Such a use is indeed in line with Tamakake’s categorization (see (6)), but as it turned out, Takigawa’s informant only associated *bee* with the hortative ‘Let’s do it’, and not at all with ‘I think I will do it’. (Takigawa 1998:70-71).

When confronted with a sentence of this type, my informant too expresses her skepticism about it. She feels ‘I think I will do it’ to be a somewhat peculiar use of *bee*, and she does not think anyone she knows would use it in this way. As such her doubting of Martin’s description does not mean that her understanding of *bee* is in line with the *bee* described by Tamakake, even though she is indeed from Sendai. While they are in agreement about the existence of hortative uses for *bee*, their ideas about what those hortative uses are, clearly differ. As there is no utterance in the videogame script that supports that she would be affected by the stereotypic *bee* here, further research is necessary to investigate whether this is the case or not.

3.4 *The degree of certainty in the conjectural bee*

Another interesting observation from Nakaniidachoo, made by both Takigawa (1998:70) and Tamakake (1998:64), is one regarding the degree of certainty in the conjectural *bee*. They show how the adverb *tabun* (perhaps) is, according to informants of higher age groups, perfectly useable together with *bee*. This fits well with the image of it as the dialectal equivalent of *daroo*, a particle which too can be combined with *tabun*.

However, the younger informants disagree with this. They seem to think of *bee* as a

conjectural marker that requires a degree of certainty much higher than *tabun*, placing it closer to the adverb *zettai* (definitively) (Takigawa 1998:70). My informant too says that a sentence with *tabun* together with *bee* does not appear natural, as she feels *tabun* to have a degree of certainty around 50% which she deems as far too low for *bee*.

If one would, while considering this, look at the utterances in the videogame containing the conjectural *bee*, and the contexts of these utterances, it would appear as if they too have a rather high degree of certainty. Of course, this could very well be seen as mere coincidence, and again more research is necessary before this change could be credited to the influences of the stereotypic *bee*.

4. Conclusion and future directions

4.1 Conclusion

In this thesis, based on the careful research conducted by Tamakake Gen at Tohoku University, the semantic categories of use and the grammatical properties of the dialectal particle *bee* were described in detail for the first time in English. Semantically it was found to be a dialectal equivalent of the conjectural particle *daroo* and the hortative suffix *-oo* of standard Japanese. Grammatically it behaves almost identically to the particle *daroo*, with the only exception being when it follows the copula in the nonpast.

My informant's use of *bee*, however, was not completely in line with this description, and some of her doubts were also raised by the younger informants of Tamakake and Takigawa. According to my informant,

1. *Bee* cannot be used together with the final particle *ne*. Tamakake and Martin both said that it can.
2. *Bee* cannot be placed in a dependent clause. Tamakake said that it can, and that this proves that *bee* is not a final particle like *yo* or *ne*. This might be indicating that *bee* is actually changing towards becoming a final particle.
3. The conjectural *bee* cannot be used together with adverbs such as *tabun* (probably), since it requires a much higher degree of certainty than that. As such it differs from its claimed equivalent *daroo*, which can be used together with *tabun* effortlessly.
4. *Bee* cannot be used as a hortative to mean 'I think I'll do it'. Tamakake said that

it can. This was pointed out by one of Takigawa's younger informants, and confirmed by my informant.

The existence of a stereotypic *bee* has also been established, and the following differences between the stereotypic marker and the dialectal one have been observed:

1. The stereotypic *bee* is not subject to any of the *ru*-changes to the verb seen in the dialects. In Sendai City dialect, for example, the *ru* changes into a doubled consonant and *bee* changes into *pee*. This is not the case with stereotypic *bee*.
2. Using the stereotypic *bee* does not imply that the speaker is from Sendai or the Tohoku area. Rather it is used as a part of role language. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the black slaves are assigned *bee* and the Tohoku dialect to convey the image that they are ill-informed, illiterate people. In *Final Fantasy X International*, the character Wakka's personality is understood in a similar way because the subtitling of his English makes heavy use of *bee*.
3. While Martin claimed that *bee* only sees a hortative use in certain dialects, the stereotypic *bee* can be both a conjectural and a hortative particle.

The stereotypic *bee* is however not limited to translation. A speaker from an area that does not have *bee* as a part of its dialect can still use the stereotypic *bee* as a form of spoken role language. We also saw the existence of stereotypic *bee* alongside the dialectal *bee* in Sendai, and my informant explained that she switches between them based on her relationship with the listener. I argue that the differences observed between how my informant uses *bee* and how Tamakake describes the dialectal *bee* in her area,

could be attributed to the dialectal *bee* being affected by its simplified, stereotypic cousin.

Whether the presence of stereotypic *bee* is responsible for this change or not, the dialectal *bee* in Sendai City dialect is indeed undergoing a so-called change from below. I believe that in the future the *bee* in this area will be a final particle without *ru*-change to the verb that can be used either as the hortative ‘Let’s do it!’ or a conjectural with a particular high degree of certainty. This will be completely in line with the stereotypic *bee*, and the two are unlikely to be distinguishable from each other.

4.2 *Topics for the future*

While extensive research has been conducted on the particle *bee* in Sendai City dialect, the behavior of *bee* in other dialects, both inside and outside of the Tohoku area, has yet to be scrutinized in a similar way. The extent of ongoing changes such as that to the degree of certainty in the conjectural *bee*, must also be investigated more thoroughly. Finally, the reasons for these changes and the possible influences of stereotypic *bee* on dialectal *bee* both require additional research before the theories raised and conclusions drawn in this thesis can be confirmed. Aside from requesting the answers to the remaining questions above, this thesis can hopefully also inspire future studies of other, less famous dialectal particles of the Tohoku area, of which there are many that deserve to be brought to the attention of the English-speaking world.

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