[EAP] Editor Decision

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To: Hironori Nishi (hnishi1) <hnishi1@memphis.edu>

Dear Author,

We have reached a decision regarding your submission to East Asian Pragmatics, "Japanese te iu ka as a sentence-final expression in writing".

Our decision is to: Accept for publication, to be scheduled for Issue 2 of 2021. The copy editor will contact you in due course. Thank you for considering EAP as an outlet for your research.

Kind regards,

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Japanese *te iu ka* as a sentence-final expression in writing

Hironori Nishi

**Abstract**

The present study explores cases of the use of the Japanese expression *te iu ka* in the sentence-final position in internet blogs and discussion boards. The analysis shows that there are two types of sentence-final *te iu ka*: one used for adding supplementary information and the other for mitigating the preceding statement. The present study also discusses processes through which *te iu ka* is placed in the sentence-final position. When sentence-final *te iu ka* is used to add supplementary information, the placement of *te iu ka* in the sentence-final position is caused by right dislocation. When sentence-final *te iu ka* is used for mitigation, it is caused by the omission of the B component in *A te iu ka B*. The present study contributes to the existing literature by offering the notion of two different formation processes of sentence-final *te iu ka*, which also affect its pragmatic functions.

**KEYWORDS**: JAPANESE, *TE IU KA*, SENTENCE-FINAL EXPRESSIONS, DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, PRAGMATICS
1. Introduction

The Japanese expression *te iu ka* has been analysed in various studies of Japanese linguistics and pragmatics (e.g., Terai, 2000; Maynard, 2001, 2004; Wakamatsu & Hosoda, 2003; McGloin, 2007a, 2007b; Zhao, 2007; Rosenthal, 2008; Laury & Okamoto, 2011; Harada, 2015; Tanno, 2017; Hayashi, Hosoda, & Morimoto, 2019). Using data from internet blogs and discussion boards, the present study will explore cases of *te iu ka* in the sentence-final position in writing. The present study aims to investigate how *te iu ka*’s communicative properties are utilised in the sentence-final position in written discourse, which seems to have less of a focus in past studies compared to cases of *te iu ka* located in other positions. In addition, the present study will also explore processes through which *te iu ka* is placed in the sentence-final position. Based on qualitative analysis of the examined data, the present study proposes that there are two processes through which *te iu ka* as a lexical item has transformed into a discourse marker in the sentence-final position.

2. *Te iu ka* and related studies

The Japanese phrase *te iu ka* consists of the quotative particle *te* (also realised as *to* or *tte*), the verb *iu* (also realised as *yuu*), which means ‘to say’, and the particle *ka*. The Japanese particle *ka* is not only typically labelled as a question marker but also as a disjunctive marker, which can be translated as ‘or’ in English, as in *A or B*.1 As a whole, the phrase *te iu ka* can be used in various communicative situations in discourse.

2.1 *Te iu ka* for rephrasing

The most commonly recognised location where *te iu ka* is used is in the sentence-medial position. When the phrase *te iu ka* is used in the sentence-medial position, as in *A te iu ka B*, it is typically translated as ‘B, rather than A’ in English. It should be noted that, even though the literal translation of *A te iu ka B* is comparable to ‘B, rather than A’ in English, when *A te iu ka B* is used in the sentence-medial position in Japanese, it is highly
likely that A in A te iu ka B is not completely denied by the speaker. Rather, some properties of A are still affirmed by the speaker when A te iu ka B is used, but some minor adjustments are made, and B is presented as a better-suited alternative to A. As Laury and Okamoto (2011) argue, this usage of te iu ka resembles the phrase I mean in English. Example (1) demonstrates this type of te iu ka translated as I mean in English.

| Kyoo wa nikudango to ingen no gomaae, beekon to jagaimo no today TP meat ball and green beans LK sesame marinade bacon and potatoes LK shio bataa te iu ka shio maagarin itame. Itadakimasu.7 salt butter te iu ka salt margarine stir fry let's eat |

In (1), te iu ka is used between shio bataa ‘salt butter’ and shio maagarin ‘salt margarine’, forming the sequence shio bataa te iu ka shio maagarin. Even though shio maagarin following te iu ka can be understood as a more accurate description that replaces shio bataa, the two items listed before and after te iu ka, ‘salt butter’ and ‘salt margarine’, are similar items with a limited degree of difference. Therefore, te iu ka in (1) appears to be used for a minor modification rather than a complete modification. Typically speaking, major modifications happen when using other expressions such as A ja nakute B ‘B, not A’ in Japanese. It should be noted that this usage of te iu ka is also analogous to what is called ‘repair’ in the field of conversation analysis (Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977; Wakamatsu & Hosoda, 2003; Rosenthal, 2008; Hayashi et al., 2019), a process through which a speaker recognises a speech error and utters what has been said with modifications.

2.2 Te iu ka for listing candidates

Using two instances of te iu ka consecutively, as in A te iu ka B te iu ka, to list candidates for a suitable word choice in a sentence or utterance is also possible. Regarding this usage of te iu ka, Hayashi et al. (2019) argue that “tte yuu ka, a frame for
presenting a tentative formulation, is used in a list construction in the form of \([X \text{ tte yuu ka}, Y \text{ tte yuu ka}, \ldots]\)” (p. 109). The following example is from an online discussion board where \textit{to iu ka}, which is one of the variants of \textit{te iu ka}, is used for listing candidates.

(2)

\begin{tabular}{llll}
Burogu toka de yatara & puraibeeto toka honne & \textit{to iu ka, hitorigoto} \\
blog etc. on recklessly private etc. true feelings & to \textit{iu ka, monologue} \\
to \textit{iu ka, shinsoo shinri} & made kookai & shicchatteru hito & ha doo iu \\
to \textit{iu ka, deep psychology even disclose do} & people TP & what kind of \\
\text{.shinkei shite iru no deshoo ka?} & nerve & have & LK CP & QP \\
\end{tabular}

‘People who disclose their private lives, etc. recklessly, true feelings \textit{to iu ka} monologues \textit{to iu ka}, what kind of nerve do they have?’

Example (2) includes two cases of \textit{to iu ka}, and the consecutive cases of \textit{to iu ka} are used as a frame for listing candidates as in \textit{honne \textit{to iu ka}, hitorigoto \textit{to iu ka}, ‘true feelings \textit{to iu ka}, monologue \textit{to iu ka}’}. Regarding the use of \textit{te iu ka} for listing candidates, it should be noted that a single case of \textit{te iu ka} can also be used for listing, using the \textit{A} and \textit{B} components in the \textit{A te iu ka B} structure as slots for listing candidates. The following excerpt includes a case of \textit{te iu ka} used for listing.

(3)

\begin{tabular}{llll}
Foobusu mimashita. Fudoosan tooshi & no kimo & \textit{to naru} \\
Forbes magazine looked at. real estate investment & LK important point & QT become \\
\textit{essensu \textit{to iu ka, minna ga hamari yasui wana ni tsuite tanteki ni kisai} essence \textit{to iu ka, everyone SB be caught easy to trap about clearly be written} \\
sarete imasu ne. Iyaa kono peeji dake demo juubun moto toremasu ne. & & & \\
FP oh this page only even enough worth the price FP \\
\end{tabular}

‘I looked at Forbes magazine. It clearly writes about the essential points in real estate investments \textit{to iu ka} the trap everyone is likely to be caught in. Oh, it’s worth the price even if it’s just this page.’

Example (3) is an excerpt from a blog in which the author writes about an article included in Forbes magazine. In (3), a single case of \textit{to iu ka} is used for listing two pieces of information, as in \textit{kimo to naru essensu to iu ka minna ga hamari yasui wana ‘essential points to iu ka the trap everyone is likely...’}
to be caught in’. The original meaning of the $A$ to $iu$ ka $B$ structure is ‘$B$, rather than $A$’ as we observed in (1) earlier in this article, but in (3), the meaning of ‘rather than’ is not clearly distinct, and the $A$ and $B$ components in the $A$ to $iu$ ka $B$ structure are used for listing potentially appropriate descriptions of what is included in the Forbes magazine article. In addition, it can also be argued that the $A$ to $iu$ ka $B$ structure in (3) is used to present two pieces of information that are about the article, rather than listing the candidates for the best-suited description.

2.3 Te $iu$ ka in the sentence-initial position

Another usage of $te$ $iu$ ka is for introducing a new topic in discourse. The following example includes a case of $te$ $iu$ ka used immediately before the writer of a blog introduces a new topic. Example (4) is from a blog entry in which the author summarises an old music show that he or she watched on TV.

Example (4) is from a blog entry in which the author summarises an old music show that he or she watched on TV.

$$\text{Kore tte Tagawa san no mochiuta na no kana? Sore o Seiko san to futari de}$$
$$\text{this QT Tagawa Mr. LK original song CP N Q that O Seiko Ms. with two people with}$$
$$\text{utau nante. Tte iu ka, aa Seiko san. Kashi machigaeteru shi.}$$
$$\text{sing QT tte iu ka oh Seiko Ms. lyrics mistake FP}$$

"Is this Mr. Tagawa’s song? He sings the song with Ms. Seiko. "Tte iu ka, oh Ms. Seiko sings the lyrics wrong.'"

In (4), the sentences prior to $te$ $iu$ ka are about a song sung by two singers. After $te$ $iu$ ka (realised as $tte$ $iu$ ka in this example), the author shifts the topic to Ms. Seiko (Seiko Matsuda), a well-known singer in Japan, making a mistake in the lyrics. Zhao (2007) calls this function of $te$ $iu$ ka “starting a new topic” (p. 7). The use of $te$ $iu$ ka in (4) contrasts with the case in (1), since $te$ $iu$ ka in (1) was used to correct what immediately preceded $te$ $iu$ ka, but in (4), the author does not deny or correct the information that precedes $te$ $iu$ ka.

2.4 Te $iu$ ka in the sentence-final position

$Te$ $iu$ ka can also be used in the sentence- or utterance-final position, without being followed by any continuing statements or utterances after it. The present article focuses on cases of $te$
iu ka used in the sentence-final position, and the analysis section of the present article will primarily discuss some unexplored properties of te iu ka in the sentence-final position. Te iu ka in the sentence-final position has been explored in past studies and is mostly discussed as a mitigation device for the preceding utterance in those studies. For example, Maynard (2001) argues that utterance-final te iu ka is a device that “expresses the speaker’s desire of avoiding a firm statement” (p. 321). Laury and Okamoto (2011) also note that, through the use of the utterance-final te iu ka, the speaker indicates that what has just been said is not adequate, which in turn may serve to mitigate or qualify that utterance. This is also analogous to McGloin’s (2007a, 2007b) analysis on utterance-final te iu ka, which claims that te iu ka in the sentence-final position can be used to mitigate the preceding statement. Example (5) includes sentence-final te iu ka used for mitigation.

(5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soo ie ba, konshuu matsu wa barentain da tte! Shitte mashita?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>by the way this week end TP valentine’s day CP QT know did you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiranai furi o shitai no wa yamayama na no desu ga, dansee ga iru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not knowing pretend O want to do LK TP really CP N CP but men SB exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shokuba ni iru ijoo wasure renai to iu ka.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>workplace in exist since forget cannot to iu ka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘By the way, we have Valentine’s Day this weekend! Did you know that? I really want to pretend that I didn’t know about this, but I can’t forget about it since there are men at my workplace to iu ka.’

To iu ka used in (5) appears to mitigate dansee ga iru shokuba ni iru ijoo wasure renai ‘I cannot forget about it since there are men at my workplace’, which directly precedes to iu ka. The impact of the statement wasure renai ‘cannot forget’ can be adjusted in many different ways by adding different expressions to it, and to iu ka seems to weaken the impact, signaling that forgetting about the chocolate is not going to bring detrimental consequences for the author, such as losing her job.

Based on the findings in previous studies, it is highly plausible that using te iu ka to mitigate the impact of a statement that precedes te iu ka is possible. However, it seems that not all
instances of sentence-final te iu ka are used for simply mitigating the statement. Example (6) is from a blog where the author writes about a sumo wrestling championship that he or she recently watched.

(6)

Demo Asashoryuu ga inakatta no de, chotto moriagari ni kaketa kanaa to.

but Ashashoryu SB not there because a little drama lacking FP QT

Hakuhoo ni taikoo deki soo na rikishi ga imasen kara nee. Hayai dankai

Hakuho against compete can do seem CP wrestler SB exist-NEG because FP early stage

de Hakuhoo no yuushoo ga mieteta tte iu ka.

in Hakuho LK champion SB predictable tte iu ka

‘But because Asashoryu (name of a sumo wrestler) was not there, it lacked drama a little bit. Because there were no other sumo wrestlers who could compete against Hakuho (name of another sumo wrestler). Hakuho winning the championship was predictable in the early stage tte iu ka.’

For instance, in (6), what precedes sentence-final tte iu ka is hayai dankai de Hakuhoo no yuushoo ga mieteta ‘Hakuho winning the championship was predictable in the early stage (of the championship).’ This seems to be an added piece of information that does not need to be mitigated. In addition, the case of te iu ka in (6) may not indicate that the writer is not satisfied with the word choice, since the statement that precedes te iu ka adds more information to what has previously been said and does not appear to be a statement that needs to be modified. Tanno (2017) notes that statements followed by utterance-final te iu ka can serve as a supplementary aid that clarifies the addressee’s understanding of the preceding statement, and his argument is compatible with the non-mitigation usages of sentence-final te iu ka as seen in (6). However, one remaining question is the semantic role played by te iu ka in the two types of utterance-final te iu ka, which are mitigating and providing additional information. More specifically, the original semantic meaning of the A te iu ka B structure is ‘B, rather than A’, where the A component is marked as something that is not fully appropriate contextually or linguistically. However, if sentence-final te iu ka can be used without mitigating the preceding statement, the meaning of ‘rather than’ may not be present in those cases, and the
formation processes for the two types of sentence-final te iu ka may also differ. In addition, cases of nan te iu ka ‘what to say’ co-occurring with te iu ka in the sentence-final position were found in the preliminary study of the present study, but those cases also remain unexplored in past studies.

3. Research design

Various studies on cases of te iu ka in the sentence-initial, sentence-medial, and sentence-final positions in discourse have been published, but it seems that there are some properties of utterance-final te iu ka that remain unexplored. In addition, previous studies mostly focus on cases of te iu ka in spoken discourse, and as far as the author of the present study is aware, the use of te iu ka in written Japanese remains mostly unexplored. To uncover the unexplored communicative and semantic properties resulting from the use of te iu ka in discourse, the present study focuses on cases of te iu ka in the sentence-final position and examines those cases qualitatively. For the present study, the example sentences and excerpts used for analysis are accessed via the Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ), which is a language database of the written version of Japanese created by the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (Maekawa, 2008).

The present study examined cases of te iu ka in the written form of Japanese rather than the spoken form for the following reasons. The first reason is for ease of identifying which cases of te iu ka are located in the sentence-final position. In the spoken form of Japanese, especially in naturally occurring conversations, it is challenging to clearly categorise the location of a given case of te iu ka into the sentence-initial, sentence-medial, or sentence-final position since there are no clear boundaries between the sentences in spoken language. For example, when a case of te iu ka appears between two sentences uttered by a speaker as in [sentence 1] te iu ka [sentence 2], te iu ka in between may be a case of sentence-final te iu ka for sentence 1 or a case of sentence-initial te iu ka for sentence 2. In addition, even when te iu ka is used in between two non-
sentential lexical units, such as nouns as in [noun A] *te iu ka* [noun B], whether the case of *te iu ka* should be considered to be attached to noun A, noun B, or uttered as an utterance-medial *te iu ka* is still unclear.

Furthermore, in co-constructed utterances, in which more than one speaker constructs an utterance as a whole, the status of *te iu ka* regarding its location in the utterance or sentence can be ambiguous. For example, if a speaker uttered *Tookyou ni iku* 'going to Tokyo' and another speaker utters *te iu ka kaeru* 'te iu ka returning' immediately following the previous utterance, clearly identifying the position in which *te iu ka* is used would be challenging. More precisely, the case of *te iu ka* in this particular example may be a case of sentence-/utterance-initial *te iu ka* for the second speaker, but if we pay attention to the whole co-constructed utterance by the two speakers, which is *Tookyou ni iku te iu ka kaeru*, the same case of *te iu ka* can be labelled as sentence-medial *te iu ka* for the whole co-constructed utterance.

To prevent the technical ambiguity and complexity that could arise from using data from spoken discourse, the present study used the data from the written version of Japanese and examined cases of *te iu ka* that were immediately followed by the Japanese full-stop symbol (。), which serves similar roles as the full-stop punctuation mark (.) in English.

In addition, the present study specifically examined cases of *te iu ka* in the sentence-final position within internet blogs and message boards. *Te iu ka* and its variants, such as *tte iu ka* and *to iu ka*, are used in both written and spoken Japanese but are somewhat casual expressions that are not frequently used in formal situations. Furthermore, since the scope of the present article is *te iu ka*’s properties in communicative situations, the present study’s data analysis targeted cases of *te iu ka* in texts in internet blogs and message boards, since they tend to be more interactive than the texts in printed media such as newspaper articles and in the main body of novels.

4. Data analysis

The present study found 129 cases of sentence-final *te iu ka* and
its variants, such as *tte iu ka* and *to iu ka*, in the internet data component of the Balanced Corpus of Contemporary Written Japanese (BCCWJ), which contained approximately 20 million words. To identify individual examples of *te iu ka* and its variants in the sentence-final position, *te iu ka* (ていうか or て言うか) and *to iu ka* (というか or と言うか) followed by the Japanese full-stop symbol (。) were input in the Chunagon search portal for the corpus, which has an interface similar to a web search engine. After eliminating obvious cases of *te iu ka* that were not used as a discourse marker, as in *X o nan to iu ka* ‘what do you call X?’ in a test question, 129 cases were available for further analysis. The following subsections will explore individual cases of *te iu ka* and discuss the communicative properties of, as well as the semantic roles played by, sentence-final *te iu ka*.

4.1 Sentence-final *te iu ka* resulting from right dislocation

Previous studies of *te iu ka* mostly discuss utterance-final *te iu ka* as a mitigation device for the preceding statement, but the present study first explores cases of utterance-final *te iu ka* that appear to be used for adding more information to the discourse, rather than mitigating the statement. One notable finding based on data analysis in the present study is the formation processes for *te iu ka* located in the sentence-final position. For cases of sentence-final *te iu ka* that are not used for mitigation, it seems that a phenomenon called right dislocation is involved. "Right dislocation" refers to the placement of words and/or phrases after the predicate component of a sentence, motivated by the speaker’s desire to "add information as an afterthought" (Iwasaki, 2013, p. 14). The comparison between the following two sentences demonstrates the right dislocation phenomenon.

(7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moo</th>
<th>aitsu</th>
<th>ni yatta yo.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>already that guy to gave</td>
<td>FF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘(I) already gave it to that guy.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moo</th>
<th>yatta yo aitsu</th>
<th>ni.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10
already gave FP that guy to
‘(I) already gave it to that guy.’

(Ono & Suzuki 1992, also cited in Iwasaki 2013, p. 14)

In Japanese, the predicate component of a sentence is typically located in the final position of the sentence. Example (7) follows this canonical word order in Japanese where the predicate component *yatta yo* ‘gave’ is located at the end of the sentence. On the other hand, in (8), *aitsu ni* ‘to that guy’ is placed after the predicate component, but due to the flexibility of word order in Japanese, the overall proportional meaning of the sentence is not differentiated between (7) and (8). This structural flexibility in Japanese allows the speaker to state additional information after the completion point of the sentence, which is typically the predicate component.

In the examined database of the present study, many cases of sentence-final *te iu ka* that appear to result from the occurrence of right dislocation were observed. The following excerpt, (9a), is from a blog where the author writes about his or her physical condition.

(9a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinoo</th>
<th>no kooishoo ka, kyoo wa ichinichijuu karada ga omokatta.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yesterday LK after effect FP today TP all day body SB was heavy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nanka ugoki ga nibui to iu ka. Kyuu ni samuku natta no mo aru
well (filler) movement SB slow to iu ka suddenly cold became N also exist

kedo, taichoo ga imaichi.
but physical condition SB not great

‘Maybe it’s the after effect from yesterday; my body was heavy all day today. The movement was slow to iu ka. It could also be because it suddenly got colder, but my physical condition is not great.’

In (9a), a case of sentence-final *to iu ka* is used, formulating *nanka ugoki ga nibui to iu ka* ‘the movement was slow to iu ka’, and this component can be considered to be relocated resulting from right dislocation from the presumed original location. The original meaning of the *A to iu ka B* structure is ‘B, rather than A’, but, as demonstrated in (2) and (3), the structure can also be used as a frame for listing multiple pieces of information regarding the stated matter, without indicating that *B* is a better
alternative to $A$. If (9a) was formulated based on the canonical word order in Japanese, in which the predicate component is located in the final position of the sentence, (9a) would have been formulated as shown in (9b).

\[(9b)\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Kinoo no kooishoo ka, kyoo wa nanka ugoki ga nibui to iu ka}\\
yesterday LK aftereffect FP today TP well (filler) movement SB slow to iu ka\\
\text{ichinichijuu karada ga omokatta. Kyuu ni samuku natta no mo aru kedo,}\\
all day body SB was heavy suddenly cold became N also exist but\\
taichoo ga imaichi.\\
physical condition SB not great\\
\end{array}
\]

'Maybe it’s the after effect from yesterday; today, the movement was slow to iu ka, my body was heavy all day. It could also be because it suddenly got colder, but my physical condition is not great.'

In (9b), \text{nanka ugoki ga nibui to iu ka'} 'my body was heavy to iu ka' is located in front of \text{ichinichijuu karada ga omokatta} 'my body was heavy all day', which follows the canonical word order of Japanese sentences. Based on the comparison between (9a) and (9b), it can be argued that the case of sentence-final \text{to iu ka} in (9a) occurred due to right dislocation, and the information that precedes \text{to iu ka} is added as an afterthought or some additional information about the prior statement. In other words, in (9a), the writer utilised the \text{A to iu ka B} structure with right dislocation, in the form of \text{B, A to iu ka}, to add \text{A} to what was stated earlier.

The following excerpt also includes a similar usage of sentence-final \text{tte iu ka} used to add supplementary information as an afterthought. Similar to the case in (9a), right dislocation is observed in (10a). In (10a), the author of a blog writes about songs written by Miwa Yoshida, a well-known singer in Japan.

\[(10a)\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Kike ba kiku dake sono toojoo jinbutsu ni taishuru omoiire ga tsuyoku}\\
\text{the more you listen that characters toward feelings SB strong}\\
natte iku n desu. Tabun... Miwa chan no kaku kyoku, monogatari mitai na n desu.\\
\text{become N CP Perhaps Miwa Ms. LK write songs narrative like CP N CP}\\
\text{Sutoorii see ga aru tte iu ka. Dakara hairi komeru no kana?}\\
\text{storyline SB exist tte iu ka that’s why can be empathic LK FP}\\
\end{array}
\]

'The more I listen (to the songs), the more I become empathetic to the characters.
In (10a), an instance of *tte iu ka* is used in the sentence-final position, formulating *sutoorii see ga aru tte iu ka* '(the songs) have storylines *tte iu ka*. This usage of *tte iu ka* in the sentence-final position appears to result from right dislocation in (10a). The following excerpt, (10b), shows what (10a) would have been in the canonical word order without right dislocation.

(10b)

| Kike ba kiku dake sono toojoo jinbutsu ni taisuru omoiire ga tsuyoku |
| the more you listen that characters toward feelings SB strong |
| natte iku n desu. Tabun... Miwa chan no kaku kyoku, sutoorii see ga aru |
| become N CP Perhaps Miwa Ms. LK write songs storyline like SB exist |
| *tte iu ka monogatari mitai na n desu. Dakara hairo komeru no kana?* |
| *tte iu ka narrative like CP N CP that’s why can be empathetic LK FP |

'The more I listen (to the songs), the more I become empathetic to the characters (in the songs). Perhaps …, the songs written by Ms. Miwa, they have storylines *tte iu ka*, are like narratives. Is that why I can be empathetic?'

In (10b), *sutoorii see ga aru tte iu ka* '(the songs) have storylines' is moved to the canonical location, and the *A tte iu ka B* structure is formed as in *sutoorii see ga aru tte iu ka monogatari mitai na n desu* '(the songs) have storylines *tte iu ka* are like narratives'. Similar to what we observed in the comparison between (9a) and (9b), (10a) can be considered to be formed as a result of right dislocation from (10b). In the *A tte iu ka B* structure with right dislocation, *B, tte iu ka A* is utilised as a linguistic frame in which the author adds supplementary information to the previous statement.

Examples (9a) and (10a) have demonstrated that utterance-final *tte iu ka* can be used when additional information is added as an afterthought. It appears that *tte iu ka* is placed in the sentence-final position due to the formation of the *A te iu ka B* structure with right dislocation, resulting in the formulation of *B, A te iu ka*. In addition, the observation of (9a) and (10a) shows that sentence-final *tte iu ka* is used to add additional information, not necessarily to mitigate the impact of a statement, unlike what Maynard (2001, 2004), McGloin (2007a, 2007b), and
Laury and Okamoto (2011) argue. For example, Laury and Okamoto (2011) state that, using sentence-final *te iu ka*, the speaker “simply indicates that he/she is not fully satisfied with the expression he/she has just used, which in turn may serve to mitigate and/or modify the preceding utterance” (pp. 230–231), but (9a) and (10a) in the present study show that the *A te iu ka B* structure with right dislocation is simply used as a frame for listing information, without indicating that the component preceding *te iu ka* needs to be modified.

It is worth noting that, when right dislocation is involved with the usage of sentence-final *te iu ka*, the meaning of ‘rather than’ cannot be present in the interpretation of the statement. For instance, in (1), the *A te iu ka B* structure was used in *shio bataa te iu ka shio maagarin itame* ‘salt butter *te iu ka* salt margarine stir fry’. In this particular example, the meaning of ‘rather than’ is clearly noticeable, and readers can recognise that *shio bataa* ‘salt butter’ is not a perfectly suitable description for what is being stated and that *shio maagarin* ‘salt margarine’ is a better-suited alternative. When the meaning of ‘rather than’ is clearly observable in the *A te iu ka B* structure, the structure cannot be modified into *B, A te iu ka* with right dislocation without affecting the meaning. This can be demonstrated by the comparison between the following two examples.

(11a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>shio bataa</th>
<th>te iu ka</th>
<th>shio maagarin</th>
<th>itame.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>salt butter</td>
<td>te iu ka</td>
<td>salt margarine</td>
<td>stir fry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Salt butter *te iu ka* salt margarine stir fry.’

(11b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#shio maagarin</th>
<th>itame,</th>
<th>shio bataa</th>
<th>te iu ka.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>salt margarine</td>
<td>stir fry</td>
<td>salt butter</td>
<td>te iu ka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Salt margarine stir fry, salt butter *te iu ka*.’

As discussed earlier, the meaning of ‘rather than’ is evident in (11a). (11b) is (11a) with right dislocation, but unlike the examples with the *A te iu ka B* structure for listing multiple pieces of information, (11b) is not contextually appropriate when the speaker believes that the stated matter is actually salt margarine, not salt butter. The comparison between (11a) and
(11b) demonstrates that the occurrence of right dislocation involving te iu ka is limited to cases where the A te iu ka B structure is used as a frame for purely listing multiple pieces of information and is not possible when te iu ka is used to mean 'rather than'.

The examined database for the present study also contains cases of sentence-final te iu ka used as a frame for purely listing multiple pieces of information and is not possible when te iu ka is used to mean 'rather than'.

The examined database for the present study also contains cases of sentence-final te iu ka used for mitigation. The next subsection will explore cases of sentence-final te iu ka used for mitigating the impact of a statement and will discuss how the formation process differs from cases of utterance-final te iu ka used for adding supplementary information.

4.2 Sentence-final te iu ka used for mitigation

The examined database also includes cases of sentence-final te iu ka that are used for mitigating the impact of a statement, which is the property of te iu ka heavily discussed in the past studies (Maynard, 2001, 2004; McGloin 2007a, 2007b; Laury & Okamoto, 2011; Tanno, 2017). Example (12) is the same as example (5), which appeared in Section 2.4 in the present study. Example (12) is a blog entry about Valentine’s Day.

Example (12) is a blog entry about Valentine’s Day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soo ie ba, konshuu matsu wa barentain da tte! Shitte mashita? Shiranai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>by the way this weekend TP valentine’s day CP QT know did you not knowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>furi o shitai no wa yamayama na no desu ga, dansee ga iru shokuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretend O want to do LK TP really CP N CP but men SB exist workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ni iru ijoo wasure rarenai to iu ka.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in exist since forget cannot to iu ka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

'By the way, we have Valentine’s Day this weekend! Did you know that? I really want to pretend that I didn’t know about this, but I can’t forget about it since there are men at my workplace to iu ka.'

As discussed earlier, to iu ka in (12) appears to mitigate dansee ga iru shokuba ni iru ijoo wasure rarenai 'I cannot forget about it since there are men at my workplace', which directly precedes to iu ka. As we observed earlier, when sentence-final te iu ka is used to add an afterthought, A te iu ka in the A te iu ka B structure is moved to the sentence-final position by right dislocation. On the other hand, for cases of sentence-final te iu ka used for mitigation, the involvement of right dislocation is
not clearly observed. For example, in (12), locating a spot where the component that includes *to iu ka* (which is *dansee ga iru shokuba ni iru ijoo wasure rarenai to iu ka* ‘I cannot forget about it since there are men at my workplace’) can be moved to is very difficult. In (9a) and (10a), it was not challenging to modify the discourse sequence to what it would have been without right dislocation and form (9b) and (10b), but for (12), the component that includes *to iu ka* cannot be moved to an earlier spot in the discourse, which shows that right dislocation is not clearly observable.

As for the factor that causes the placement of *te iu ka* in the sentence-final position in cases where *te iu ka* is used for mitigation, the omission of the component that follows *te iu ka* seems to be the most plausible explanation. For this type of sentence-final *te iu ka*, Maynard (2001) states that sentence-final *te iu ka* “mitigates the prior utterance and it is followed by a possible alternative” and also “that alternative remains unmentioned” (p. 323). In this type of omission of the B component in the *A te iu ka B* structure, the structure still retains the meaning of ‘rather than’, and is functioning as a mitigation device located in the utterance-final position.

The following excerpt further demonstrates how the *A te iu ka B* structure without the *B* component can be used for mitigation. Example (13) is from a blog entry in which the author writes about a book he or she is currently reading.

(13)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Koo iu no tte, ‘shadatsu na bunshoo’ tte iu no kanaa. Kanari</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>this like LK QT sophisticated CP text QT called LK FP quite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nigate. Natsume Soseki no Gubijinsoo yondeta toki no tsurasa o omoidashita.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dislike Soseki Natsume LK Gubijinsoo reading when LK pain O reminded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ichii, hinetta hyoogen o suru mon da kara, hyoogen shiteiru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>every single time twisted expression O do N CP because describe do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mono no honshitsu ga, kaette mizurai to iu ka. Jinbutsu, fuukee,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thing LK essential point SB rather hard to see to iu ka characters scenery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shinjoo toka ga.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feelings etc. SB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘I wonder if texts like this are called “sophisticated texts”. I dislike this a lot. It reminded me of Gubijinsoo (name of a book) by Soseki Natsume. The author uses a twisted expression every single time, and it’s hard to see the essential points of what the author is trying to describe to *te iu ka*. The characters,
In (13), *to iu ka* is used in the sentence-final position as in *hyoogen shiteiru mono no honshitsu ga, kaette mizurai to iu ka* ‘it’s hard to see the essential points of what the author is trying to describe *to iu ka*’. This case of *to iu ka* appears to be used to mitigate the statement that directly precedes it. Similar to what we observed in the previous example, in (13), there is no spot to which the component that includes *te iu ka* can be moved earlier in the discourse. This indicates that right dislocation is not present in (13). Instead, the case of sentence-final *te iu ka* in (13) appears to result from the omission of the B component in the *A te iu ka B* structure and is functioning as a mitigation device for the statement.

4.3 Two types of utterance-final *te iu ka*

The present study has explored cases of *te iu ka* used in the sentence-final position. The data analysis demonstrates that there are largely two types of sentence-final *te iu ka* with different communicative properties, as well as different formation processes through which *te iu ka* is located in the sentence-final position. The following table summarises the properties of the two different types of sentence-final *te iu ka* explored in this article.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Communicative properties</th>
<th>Formation process</th>
<th>Discourse sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type I</td>
<td>Adding supplementary information</td>
<td>Right dislocation</td>
<td><em>B, A te iu ka.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type II</td>
<td>Mitigating the preceding statement</td>
<td>Omission of B in <em>A te iu ka B</em></td>
<td><em>A te iu ka.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As summarised in Table 1, when sentence-final *te iu ka* is used to add supplementary information to what has already been stated (Type I), the placement of *te iu ka* in the sentence-final position is caused by right dislocation, involving the movement
of A te iu ka to the spot after the B component. In this use of sentence-final te iu ka, the meaning of ‘B, rather than A’ is not present with the te iu ka structure. Instead, the structure is used as a placeholder for listing multiple pieces of information. This lack of the meaning ‘rather than’ was also observed in cases of the te iu ka structure used as a frame for providing a list reported by Hayashi et al. (2019). The Type I cases of sentence-final te iu ka can also be interpreted as the right dislocation variant of what Hayashi et al. report.

On the other hand, when sentence-final te iu ka is used for mitigating the illusionary force of the statement (Type II), the placement of te iu ka in the sentence-final position is caused by the omission of the B component in the A te iu ka B structure, indicating that the A component is not a fully satisfactory way of describing the stated matter, but still, an alternative is not explicitly stated. With this use of te iu ka in the sentence-final position, the meaning of ‘B, rather than A’ is still present without B being explicitly stated. Japanese is known to have many expressions that can be used as sentence-final expressions, even though they are not typically categorised as such. For example, various contrastive markers in Japanese such as kedo and ga can be used in the utterance-final position as in yoyaku shitai n desu ga ‘I want to make a reservation, but …’ and the component after the contrastive marker is not explicitly stated, creating various communicative effects such as politeness marking and hedging. In addition, Suzuki (1995) demonstrates that mitai na, which is originally a noun-qualifying expression mitai na, which is used as in X mitai na Y ‘Y, resembling X’, can be used as a sentence-final expression that marks that the speaker is distancing himself/herself from the content of the statement. Furthermore, McGloin and Konishi (2010) report that the usage of the reasoning marker shi as a sentence-final particle is emerging in modern Japanese. According to McGloin and Konishi, shi in the utterance-final position marks the speaker’s emotional stance toward the proposition, context, or addressee, often with the speaker’s negative attitude. Maynard (2001) notes that the grammaticalisation theory by Traugott (1982, 1989) attempts to establish a diachronic process that grammatical elements often evolve from lexical sources, and
they semantically shift from propositional to textual and then to attitudinal meanings. The original semantic meaning of the $A \ text{te iu ka} B$ structure is ‘B, rather than A’, but the structure is used in various locations in discourse in various forms, with or without the $A$ or $B$ component. The Type II cases of sentence-final $\text{te iu ka}$ appear to be one of the linguistic items that have been transformed from lexical items to discourse markers for more subjective information, such as attitude and stance.

4.4 Hybrid type

The previous section discussed the two types of sentence-final $\text{te iu ka}$ and their differing formation processes. However, it should be noted that not all cases of sentence-final $\text{te iu ka}$ can be clearly categorised into Type I or II. Clear cases of Type I or II examples belong to the two ends of a spectrum, and many cases in actual discourse fall somewhere on the spectrum between the two furthest ends. Example (14) is from an online message board where the author writes about the difference between drivers of Mercedes Benz and compact cars.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(14)</th>
<th>Tabun, bentsu ni notte iru hito tte, yoyuu ga aru n deshoo ne. Jikan ya okane ni. Hanmen, keejidoosha no hito tachi wa, jikan ni mo money about On the other hand compact cars LK people time about also okane ni mo yoyuu ga nai desho. Binboo hima nashi tte iu ka. money about also relaxed SB NEG CP poverty time NEG tte iu ka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>perhaps Mercedes Benz drive people QT relaxed N CP FP time and money about On the other hand compact cars LK people time about also okane ni mo yoyuu ga nai desho. Binboo hima nashi tte iu ka. money about also relaxed SB NEG CP poverty time NEG tte iu ka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In (14), sentence-final $\text{tte iu ka}$ is used following $\text{binboo hima nashi}$ ‘poverty no time’. This case of sentence-final $\text{tte iu ka}$ can be considered to function as a mitigation device, since $\text{binboo hima nashi}$ ‘poverty no time’ is a somewhat harsh expression, and mitigation is likely to follow a harsh statement. Concurrently, the placement of $\text{tte iu ka}$ in the sentence-final position in (14) can also be considered to result from right dislocation. In (14), $\text{binboo hima nashi tte iu ka}$ can be relocated before $\text{jikan ni mo okane ni mo}$ ‘about time and money’, forming...
a sequence *binboo hima nashi tte iu ka jikan ni mo okane nimo yoyuu ga nai* ‘poverty no time tte iu ka not relaxed about time and money’. Therefore, the case of *tte iu ka* in (14) can also be interpreted as a device to add supplementary information to what has been stated. As demonstrated by the usage of sentence-final *tte iu ka* in (14), Type I and Type II cases of sentence-final *te iu ka* are not mutually exclusive, and a single case of *te iu ka* could signal mitigation, as well as be used as a device to add supplementary information to the prior discourse.

4.5 *Nan te iu ka*: Co-occurrence of *nan* ‘what’ and *te iu ka*

Finally, one noteworthy finding from the data for the present study is the somewhat frequent usages of *nan te iu ka* among cases of sentence-final *te iu ka* used. Of the 129 cases of sentence-final *te iu ka* found in the examined data, 12 cases were formed as *nan te iu ka*. *Nan te iu ka* is a combination of *nan* ‘what’ and the quotative marking *te* and the verb *iu* ‘to say’, and the literal meaning of the phrase as a whole is comparable to ‘what to say’ in English. *Nan te iu ka* is also realised as *nan to iu ka* with the quotative marking *to*, but *nan te iu ka* is used as a cover term to refer to the two resembling forms in the present study.

*Nan te iu ka* is often used as a filler in conversation, but studies on *nan te iu ka* in discourse are few. Rin (2011) specifically focuses on the use of *nan te iu ka* in conversation, but her study is mostly about misused cases of *nan te iu ka* by Japanese learners. Furthermore, to my knowledge, no study on *te iu ka* used in the sentence-final position in discourse has been conducted.

The following excerpt is from the data used for the present study and includes a case of sentence-final *nan to iu ka*. In (15), the writer of a blog writes about organising her home.

(15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shokki toka wa fuete nai n da kedo konaida jiisanni ‘Kazoku ga fueta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tableware etc. TP increase NEG N CP but recently grandfather family SB increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kara mono ga fueta naa’ tte iwareta no ne. Tashika ni tsukau mono ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because things SB increased FP QT was said CP FP truly use things SB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fueta kara sugu ni afureteru tte kanji ga inamenai tte iu ka nan te iu ka.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I don’t have more tableware but my grandfather recently said to me that “there are more things because we have more family members”. It is true that I cannot deny that it’s like things overflow quickly because we have more things to use tte iu ka nan te iu ka.’

As observed in (15), most cases of nan te iu ka in the examined data followed a case of te iu ka, forming a sequence such as A te iu ka nan te iu ka. As Rin (2011) notes, nan te iu ka in discourse mostly functions as a filler, not as an interrogative phrase in the literal sense. Among many other functions, fillers are also known to function as a mitigation marker in discourse (e.g. House & Kasper, 1981). Nan te iu ka in Japanese is one of those fillers that also function as a mitigation device. The sequence te iu ka nan te iu ka in the sentence-final position, as seen in (15), appears to be a stronger case of mitigation for the preceding statement, since a single case of te iu ka signals mitigation, and is also followed by another mitigation marker nan te iu ka.

What is notable on the usages of nan te iu ka is that, as a filler, it is typically located in the sentence-initial position, but it can also be used in the sentence-final position as a device to mitigate the preceding statement with the te iu ka structure. The following excerpt from a blog includes an example of nan te iu ka used in the sentence-initial position.

(16)

Sate, kono arubamu na n desu ga, shoojiki iimashite watashi wa doo
by the way this album CP N CP but honest say I TP how
hyooka shite ii mono ka nayamimasu. Nan to iu ka, kono arubamu de
evaluate do good N Q not sure nan to iu ka this album by
Utoku Keiko san no miryoku ga katareru ka, to iu to watashi ni wa chotto
Keiko Utoku Ms. LK charm SB discuss Q QT say QT I for SB a little
muzukashii n desu.
difficult N CP

‘By the way, as for this album, to be honest I’m not sure about how I should evaluate it. Nan to iu ka, it’s difficult for me to discuss the charm of Keiko Utoku through this album.’

In (16), the author of the blog writes about an album by Keiko Utoku, a popular singer in the 1990s in Japan. In the second sentence in the excerpt, nan to iu ka is used as a filler in the
sentence-initial position, possibly functioning as a mitigation device for the statement that follows nan to iu ka. Even though nan to iu ka, which is located in the sentence-initial position, is not included in the primary scope of the present study, it is worth noting that nan to iu ka can function as a mitigation device both in the sentence-initial and sentence-final positions. This flexibility of nan to iu ka parallels the flexible usages of the mitigation marking so to speak in English, which is also considered to be a discourse marker that has emerged from more lexical usages (Claridge, 2013).

5. Conclusion

The present study has explored the pragmatic functions of te iu ka located in the sentence-final position in writing, using the data from internet discussion boards and personal blogs. Data analysis of the present study has revealed that there are two types of sentence-final te iu ka: one is used to add supplementary information to the prior discourse and the other to mitigate the statement that directly precedes te iu ka. The present study has also illustrated that the two uses of sentence-final te iu ka are not necessarily mutually exclusive, meaning that a single case of sentence-final te iu ka can be used as a device that enables the speaker/writer to add supplementary information and as a mitigation device simultaneously. In addition, the present study has discussed nan te iu ka located in the sentence-final position, which is used as a stronger mitigation marker in the form of te iu ka nan te iu ka. Compared to a single case of te iu ka used for mitigation, te iu ka nan te iu ka seems to be a stronger form of mitigation.

Previous studies on te iu ka (e.g., Maynard, 2001, 2004; McGloin, 2007a, 2007b; Laury & Okamoto, 2011) mostly explore te iu ka from a discourse/pragmatic point of view, and te iu ka's communicative functions, such as marking inadequacy, repair initiator, mitigation, and metalinguistic negation, are crucial to fully grasp how te iu ka is used in discourse. However, as Hayashi et al. (2019) point out, the te iu ka structure can also be simply used as a linguistic frame for listing alternative expressions for the described matter, and
sentence-final *te iu ka* used for adding supplementary information can be understood as the *A te iu ka B* structure used as a frame for listing with right dislocation, which results in the formation of *B, A te iu ka*. Furthermore, the data analysis of the present study suggests that cases of *nan te iu ka* in the sentence-final position can also be interpreted as the filler *nan te iu ka* placed in the *B* position in the *A te iu ka B* structure, which further mitigates the preceding statement. I believe that, by examining *te iu ka* in the sentence-final position, the present study contributes to our further understanding of the discourse marker *te iu ka*, as well as the mechanisms through which the same discourse marker is used for different pragmatic and linguistic purposes. As mentioned earlier, there are various Japanese expressions that seem to be transformed from lexical items to discourse markers. For future studies, exploring the shared properties among those other discourse markers and *te iu ka* may further contribute to decoding the holistic mechanisms behind the usages of *te iu ka* in communicative situations.

About the author

Hironori Nishi currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Japanese in the Department of World Languages and Literatures at the University of Memphis. His research interests include discourse analysis, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, second-language acquisition, and classroom pedagogy.

Notes

1. Whether *ka* in *te iu ka* should be called a question marker or a disjunctive marker is still under debate. For more details, see McGloin (2007a, 2007b).

2. The example sentences used in the present study are from internet blogs and discussion boards, including the ones used in the introduction section. Details of the research methods used in the present study are discussed in Section 3.

3. *Tte yuu ka* is one of the variants of *te iu ka*, but it is mostly given as *te iu ka* in writing.
4. In Zhao’s original article in Japanese, it is phrased as *hanashi no kiridashi*.

5. By using ていうか and て言うか for searching, cases of ていうか and て言うか, both Romanised as *tte iu ka*, were also included in the search results.

6. The Chunagon search portal can be accessed at https://chunagon.ninjal.ac.jp/.

7. It should be noted that the phenomenon called right dislocation is not identical to the formation of scrambled sentences, in which the predicate is kept in the final position of the sentence, while other components deviate from the canonical word order. For more details of scrambled sentences, see Tsujimura (2014), Hasegawa (2015), Yoshimura (2017), etc.

8. The symbol # indicates that the example is grammatical, but contextually, not appropriate.

References


**Transcription conventions and abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Various forms of copula verb be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP</td>
<td>Final particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LK</td>
<td>Nominal linking particle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Nominaliser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEG</td>
<td>Negative morpheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Object marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Question marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QT</td>
<td>Quotative marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Subject marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TP</td>
<td>Topic marker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>