

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the usage and the attitudinal function of the final particle "yo" from the perception of the Japanese samples who assumed themselves as the receiver of the sentences that use "yo" in different situations. This study also compare the perception of Thai samples with Japanese samples. In addition, the restrictive usage of "yo" is also discussed.

The example sentences were collected from scenario of dramas and movies from magazines. They were classified by context, and chosen to make questionnaires for Japanese and Thai samples. The samples, chosen by convenience sampling, are 100 Japanese and 100 Thai nationals. The questionnaires' results are analyzed in frequency and percentage.

The findings show that the final particle "yo" is commonly used to inform the speaker's knowledge, opinion or judgment when the speaker assumes that the listener does not know or recognize that matter at the time of speaking. However, it is also used in 3 cases; when the speaker wants to get any information from a listener who looks unhappy and to express the speaker's thoughtfulness, when "yo" is used with the adverb "dōse" it expresses the speaker's irony or bitterness, and "yo" is also used for expressing anger, dissatisfaction, anxiety, or astonishment when the speaker murmurs to himself

The findings also show that the function of the final particle "yo" is to express the speaker's emotions which conduct two major perceptions; positive attitude and negative attitude. But it may conduct ambiguous perception. The context, sentence type and situation of the conversation, play an important role in the perception of attitudes. This is because the particle dose not contain any specific meaning as a content word normally does. It depends on the context and situation. The positive perception mostly occurs in declarative sentence. But "yo" in imperative sentence and interrogative sentence is normally associated with the negative perception. However, it may lead to a contrary result, depending on the situation.

The final particle "yo" also has a functional effect on the degree of softness of the whole utterances. It is related to the function of "yo" that expresses the speaker's attitudes that produce positive, negative and ambiguous perceptions. The softness of utterance can be recognized mostly in positive perception. On the contrary, the hard tone in utterance mostly

occurs in negative perception. However, when the receiver's perception is ambiguous, the perception on softness and intensity will be indifferent, or depend on the coexistence of positive or negative perception.

The comparative result between the perception of Thai samples and Japanese samples is mostly similar. It is because the context plays an important role in the recognition of attitudinal function. However, the Thai samples tend to perceive the function of "yo" with gratitude and speaker's confidence much more than the Japanese samples do. Thai samples also weakly perceive some attitudinal function of "yo" when it is not obviously seen in the context. They tend to regardlessly perceive on the speaker's consideration when "yo" is used to give a new information, and their perception on the speaker's enforcement is quite weak when "yo" is used in imperative sentence and when the speaker want to emphasize his/her opinion. The findings also show that Thai samples who hardly use Japanese language perceive the function of "yo" more differently than Thai samples who are familiar with Japanese language.