Quotation patterns in Japanese political discourse

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This study examines the use of quotations in Japanese by political figures when they speak in a public arena, such as open debates, street speeches, or on political affairs television programs. The study first discusses the pragma-linguistic complexity involved in quotation patterns in Japanese. Adopting Kamada (2000)’s theoretical approach to quotation patterns in Japanese, I argue that the direct-indirect dichotomy characterizing English cannot account for the Japanese data. The degrees of (a) perspective taken by the speaker themselves in quoting, as illustrated by deictic expressions, and (b) “interactiveness” the speaker wants to integrate into the quotation via modality usage seem to create a continuous reported-ness pattern.

0. Introduction

Quotations appeared quite frequently in the political discourse examined in this study. Different political figures used them in various amounts. This study found several types of quotations from an interactional sociolinguistic point of view (Gumperz, 1982; Schiffrin, 1994; Maynard, 1996). The first observation is that politicians tend to make use of “constructed quotations” (Tannen, 1989), which is a quote-like pattern with no real source. Secondly, at times they incorporate registers and styles of language which may not be sociolinguistically suitable for their roles (i.e., as authoritative public officials) into the quotations, yet get away without being socially criticized for it. Thirdly, the quotations tend to occur within an embedded narrative designed to create conversational impact for the protagonists. The study illustrates these observations with actual segments from discourse data recorded over the past three years. The examination of quotations in the political discourse has shown us that quotations, because of the particular versatality available in Japanese, are resourceful for speakers as a conversational rhetorical device (Hutchby, 1996; Bilmes, 1999).

I will first discuss the pragma-linguistic complexity involved in quotation patterns in Japanese. Secondly, I will examine a set of actual tokens of the quotation patterns in a set of political discourse, adopting an interactional sociolinguistic approach to discourse (Gumperz, 1982; Schiffrin, 1994).

In previous studies (Ikeda, 2004; 2005), I have argued that the use of quotations is a frequently adopted rhetorical device for Japanese political figures, at least when they are used in the media. This study provides a linguistic account for their usage. The use of quotations in Japanese, because of their much greater versatality (as compared to English), enables the speaker to encode a rich pragmatic effect to meet the social purpose at hand. The aim of this paper is to illustrate how this is so.
1. Direct-indirect dichotomy in English quotations

The following two sentences are typical examples of English direct and indirect quotations. These sentences are intended to be uttered orally; hence quotation marks are used merely for the readers’ reference.

(1) Direct Quotation in English
"I will be there!" he said.

(2) Indirect Quotation in English
He yelled that he would be here.

In (1), the quotation records someone else’s statement verbatim, therefore we see the same person deictic expressions (e.g., first person singular I) as they were more likely “produced” by the original speaker. In this sentence, I and he refer to the same speaker. The intonation contour of the quotation, as indicated by the exclamation mark, is also a feature of direct quotations. In comparison, (2) is an indirect quotation in English. The quotation is structurally transformed into a subordinate clause (CP), and the personal reference is consistently third person singular in both clauses. We also see tense adjustment. In (1), the modal will is kept in the present tense whereas it is adjusted to the past tense (would) in the main clause. These adjustments in (2) allow the scope of the perspective of the whole sentence in the speaker (me), and the event described in it, to be understood as the speaker’s interpretation of it. The expression by yelling also tells us that the speaker’s subjectivity is at work; in an indirect quotation, the speaker of the utterance can dramatize the delivery of the content of the quotation as he or she sees fit.

In English, the dichotomy between direct and indirect quotations seems very salient. Indirect quotations must take a different syntactic structure from direct quotation; syntax gives away which type of quotation is in use right away. A caveat here is that this distinction does not imply that indirect quotations are more speaker-subjective than direct quotations. What can be called a quotation is not merely limited to a direct representation of others’ speech; we often create scenarios in which we use constructed quotations which do not correspond precisely to an original source. Tannen (1989) calls these “constructed dialogues,” and in fact, they almost always appear as direct quotations.

2. A fuzzy distinction: Japanese quotations

As previously discussed by Kamada (2000; 1986), I also argue that the simple direct-indirect dichotomy for quotations, which may seem reasonable in English, does not apply well to Japanese. Rather than this dichotomy, we ought to consider a continuum of structural patterns for Japanese quotations.

In this study, I will focus on the direct-type quotations, focusing on the variability within them. The reason for this is that the data for this study evidenced predominantly direct-quotations types. Let us first compare two examples for an illustration.
(3) a. Direct Quotation

Kinoo Taroo wa boku ni [ asu wa dare mo boku ni uchi e konai daroo na] to itta.

Yesterday Taro Top I to tomorrow Top who also I of house to come-neg perhaps IP Qrt said

Yesterday, Taro said to me, “There will be no one coming to my house tomorrow.”

b. Semi-Direct Quotation

Kinoo Taroo wa boku ni kyoo wa boku ni uchi e konai daroo Ø to itta.

Yesterday Taro Top I to today Top I of house to come-neg perhaps Qrt said

Yesterday, Taro said to me that there will no one coming to his/my house today.

These types differ in the following features. One is the perspective taken by the speakers themselves, displayed in terms of deixis- for example, in the above sentences, the use of time deixis ashita (tomorrow), and personal reference boku ‘I’, which do not contain any perspective adjustment to the time the sentence is uttered. This indicates that this quotation is a direct type. Boku ‘I’ cannot refer to anyone else but Taro in (3a). When we examine the second type (3b), the absence of a final sentence particle means that boku ‘I’ can be understood to either be Taro, or the speaker himself. However, the use of kyoo ‘today’ instead of ashita ‘tomorrow’ indicates that there has been some adjustment of deixis in the quotation to meet the context of the utterance produced. The mixed feature in (3b) is not ungrammatical in Japanese language; rather, it exists as a “hybrid” version of direct and indirect quotation syntactic features. Depending on what follows the sentence, we can interpret this quotation as being more direct or more indirect, as illustrated by the following two examples. (4a) and (4b) are possible continuations for (3b).

(4) a. Demo jissaini wa jyuu nin mo yatte komeatta.

But actually Top ten people also come-gerund troubled

but actually, ten people came over and it was troublesome.

b. Demo jissaini wa jyuu nin mo yatte kita yooda.

But actually Top ten people also come-past seem

but actually it seems that ten people have come over.

The difference between (4a) and (4b) is the use of the evidential modality (yooda) in (4b) to indicate that the propositional information “ten people have come over” is secondhand information or hearsay (Johnson, 2003). In Japanese, when (4a) follows (3b), we would interpret boku ‘I’ in the quotation to refer only to the speaker of the sentence. However, when (4b) follows it, it is more likely that boku in the quotation refers to Taro, and not to the speaker. As shown here, the semi-direct quotation relies on its embedded context to fix the reference of the pronouns. Semi-direct quotations are one piece of evidence that Japanese quotations work differently than in English.

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1 In this paper, [ ] indicates the quotation in the Japanese examples. Glosses for abbreviations used are provided at the end of the paper.

2 Some of the English translations for the examples in this paper do not sound natural, but in order to preserve equivalency to the Japanese structure, I will leave them as they are.
3. **Modality and Japanese quotations**

Another interesting feature that we should note here is the use of modality in the sentence. Among the classifications of modality expressions, Kamada (2000) and Yamauchi (2002) point out that modalities of judgment such as *daroo* (probably), *da* (declarative), *kamo shirenai* (maybe), and modalities such as command, invitation, and request, do not co-occur with the deixis change, as seen in (3a). As a result, the use of these modality items renders the quotation more direct.

Sentence final particles, recognized as discourse modality (Maynard, 1993) or what has also been called interactional particles such as *ne, yo, zo* in Japanese, are also typical features of direct quotation. In (3a), a final sentence particle *na* is used; together with the other features it promotes the interactiveness of the quotation even further.

Instead of seeing these features as optional for direct quotation, Kamada (2000) suggests that the best way to understand them is as markers on a continuum of perspective adjustment and texture of interaction embedded in the sentence. The figure below, which represents his conceptualization, illustrates this point. In addition to the perspective adjustment, Kamada (2000) emphasizes that the speaker’s crafting of “conversational quality,” as I rephrase it in this paper, determines the directness or indirectness of a quotation.

![Figure 1. Continuum of Japanese Quotations.](image)

4. **Use of quotations in authentic discourse: A case of political discourse**

These interesting characteristics of Japanese quotations can be found in naturally occurring discourse data. In this paper, I will specifically deal with the discourse data spoken by political figures in Japan on a television program called *Sandee Purojekuto* (Sunday Project). The data were collected from programs aired 2003-2004. For the purpose of this particular study, four well-recognized politicians who frequently appear on the show as guest speakers were chosen: Shintaro Ishihara, the Governor of Tokyo prefecture; Tanaka Yasuo, a former Governor of Nagano prefecture; Heizo Takenaka, then Minister of Finance; and Shigeru Ishiba, then Minister of Self-Defense. Quotations appear quite frequently in the political discourse examined in this study.

For this study, 15 minute-long monologal segments were extracted and examined for their use of quotations. The four speakers used quotations in varying frequencies. Table 1 illustrates the total tokens observed in 15 minutes of discourse for each politician.
Table 1. Total Tokens Observed in the 15 minute-long Discourse by Each Speaker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Ishihara</th>
<th>Tanaka</th>
<th>Takenaka</th>
<th>Ishiba</th>
<th>Ishiba (Diet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tokens</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the far right, there is one more column for Ishiba, which was collected from the Diet (parliament) sessions rather than the television show. Note that the same speaker used far more quotations in the television show compared to the Diet case. This illustrates that quotations and the politician’s speech do not form a simplistic link; we might need to consider that quotations in their speech help construct the speech occasion in a Hymsian sense (1974). Why political figures tend to use more quotations on television will be discussed later.

5. Types of quotations

What types of quotation were utilized by these political figures? The dominant types of quotations found in the data were direct quotations with a variety of markers. The prototypical marker we know is *to*, or *tte*, however, the study found that there were many more varieties. Table 2 summarizes them, along with an example of each.

Table 2. Quotation Markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marker</th>
<th>Example Sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>To</em></td>
<td>[Sonna koto dekiru hazu ga nai daroo]to. Such thing can-do plan Subj Neg Cop Qrt <em>(they say)</em> “it’s impossible to do such a thing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tte</em></td>
<td>[Jiki soosshoo] tte n da ne, gaimushoo wa. Time early Qrt Nom Cop IP Foreign Ministry Top the Foreign Ministry says “it’s too early.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Toka</em></td>
<td>[Hahei shinai to shinyoo sooshitsu desu] toka ne Send troops neg if trust loss Cop Qrt IP some say “if we don’t send the SDF we’ll lose the trust”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tsu tteru</em></td>
<td>[Isamashiku ikimashoo] tsu tteru hito Courageously let’s go Qrt saying people those who say “let’s do this with courage”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>[Nippon mo hita ja nai ka (.) Kankoku mo hikoo.] Japan also withdraw Cop neg Q Korea also withdraw “Look, Japan, withdraw; let us, Korea, do the same.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Toka* is said to be different from the use of the standard quotative marker *to* (Suzuki, 2004), by distancing the conveyed message from the speaker; it indicates that the quotation is not exactly the proposition the speaker wants to convey. In addition to *toka*, there are many examples of unmarked quotations, as we find in English (Mathias & Yule, 1994). Varying the style of the quotative markers used in Japanese is an interesting phenomenon, as it facilitates a display of the speaker’s attitude toward the quotation. For example, the casual-coercive style of quotation marking such as “*tsu tte*” or “*tte n da*” is a clear “colouring” device: “*tsu tteru*” indicates that the speaker does not view the quoted content positively.
6. Further illustrations of quotations in use

In this section, three segments from the analysis are illustrated in a microanalytic fashion. The first one is from Ishihara, the governor of Tokyo, as aired on November 9th, 2003.

(5) Ishihara Shintarō (Governor of Tokyo) 2003-11-09

1 Monderu ni [amerika no kisha ga kore de senkakushotoo ga hi o huitara Mondale to USA of journalist Subj this with Senkaku Islands Subj fire Obj explode-if with
2 Nichibeianpori de beigun wa deteiku no ka] Japan-US treaty with US force Top come out Comp Q
When American journalists asked Mondale “whether the US military would go protect Japan in case of war over the Senkaku Islands,”
3 Monderu wa genkakuni [no ] to itta. Mondale Top severely No Qrt said
Mondere severely said, “No.”
4 [Konna taishi oitoite ii no ka] tte kamitsuita no wa Such ambassador stay good Comp Q Qrt railed Nom Top
5 Boku dake datta n da yo. I only Cop Nom Cop IP
And I was the only one who railed about this saying “how could we even let this kind of ambassador be.”
6 Kyoowatoo ga [konna taishi oitoitara nichibei anzen mazuku Republican Subj such ambassador Obj stay-if Japan-US security bitter
7 Naru zo] tte n de sokkoku kubi desu yo. Become IP Qrt Nom Cop immediately dismiss Cop IP
Then the Republican Party thought “it would become an issue for the Japan-US relations if we leave this ambassador in Japan,” so they immediately dismissed him.

The quotations are found in lines 2, 3, 4, and 6-7, and can all be categorized as direct quotations. The quotation in line 2 does not have quotation marks; it has no deixis adjustment, and the interactional particle no ka is used. The source of the quotation (American journalists), is also mentioned. The quotations in lines 2 and 3 must be considered simultaneously; they are adjacent to each other, and they are produced as a question-and-answer dialogue between the journalists and the former ambassador of the United States, Walter Mondale. The code-switching on the quotation in line 3 also has a theatrical effect. The quotation in line 4 is a self-quotatio (Maynard, 1994) in which the use of konna ‘such’ and the sentence finally placed no ka, which turned the sentence to an interrogative, increases the conversational quality. What is interesting about this quotation is the verb that follows: after the quotation marker tte, the speaker says kamitsuita “I railed against [him]” to add affective emphasis to the utterance.

The quotation in line 4 is also immediately produced after Ishihara’s self-quotatio, marking the source of the quotation to be the Republican Party. Again, no adjustment of deixis is
observed and the interactional marker zo is used to end the quotation. These features make the quotation sound more conversational.

In this segment, we see how Ishihara constructs a narrative of an incident by inserting quotations sourced from four different protagonists: American journalists, Walter Mondale, himself, and the Republican Party. The direct quotations used here successfully enable him to configure four different voices, yet deliver the storyline without confusion. They also lend credibility to his story: if the speaker can quote the protagonists so clearly that they sound “realistic” (i.e., by means of direct quotations) then the speaker “must” be telling a true story. Thus, his choice of quotations reveal a clever rhetorical tactic.

The next segment also shapes a narrative, produced by Yasuo Tanaka, the then-governor of Nagano and the current leader of the New Japan Party (NJP), since August 2005. He is talking about how current national policy for local issue management (such as road repairs) hinders local autonomy and impedes success.

(6)  Tanaka Yasuo (Governor of Nagano)  2003-06-22

1 Daikibo donogurai ka yaku sen gohyaku meeteru gurai. 1.5 kiro.
Big scale how much Q about 1000 5000   meters about 1.5 kilometers
2 Naosu to shimasu.
Repair Qrt decide/do
  A large scale( construction), how much, say 1500 meter or so. Say they decide to repair 1.5 kilo of the road.
3 Kore ga  rokusen man en gurai no shigoto dattara
This Subj 60,000,000  yen about   of work   Cop-if
4 Daikibo ni kimitachi yaru n dakara  yon wari hutan suru dake de
Big scale to  you   do Nom because 40 percent co-pay do  only with
5 Ii   yo: to yuu to nisyen yonhyaku man en  ni naru  wake desu.
Good IP Qrt say when 2,400,000       yen to become  Nom Cop
If this construction is worth 60,000,000yen, then the national system would say “you guys are going to do something at large scale, so your coverage as the local government would be only 40%” so the total cost would be 2,400,000 yen.
6 Tokoroga richigina todoohuken choo  ga  ite sonanni mada ichi ten go kiro mo
But cordial pref government Subj exist such yet  1.5 kilometers as much
7 Kowaretanai to.
Broken-neg Qrt
However, if there is a cordial local government say
“we do not have 1.5 kilo of damage yet.”
8 Dakedomo jimoto yooboo ga  aru kara  yappari semete ichi kiro
But   local   request Subj have because after all   at least 1 kilometer
9 Gurai wa naosanakya to shimasu.
About Top repair-must Qrt decide
“But listening to the residents’ request, we must repair at least 1 kilo.”  They decide.
The quotations are found in lines 4-5, 6-7, and 8-9. They appear back to back, and take the form of direct quotes. As with Ishihara, Tanaka’s quotations refer to three types of protagonists: local residents; the governing officials of the region; and the national government. By hearing the quotations in close proximity to each other, the listener perceives them as a dialogue. Unlike Ishihara, the speaker is not one of the protagonists.

At this point, we should discuss the ways of “formulation” (Edwards, 2000; Sacks, 1992) of the quotation beyond the choice of morphology. For instance, in lines 4-5, Tanaka formulates the quotation using the personal reference kimi-tachi ‘you guys’ and an interactional particle yo with lengthening, which marks the “animated” voice in Goffmanian sense (1974) here. This represents how national government officials look down upon regional governments. The quotations in lines 6-7 and 8-9 represent the voice of the regional government officials. In them we see the use of polite style predicates, and the actual recording reveals a sincere tone during their utterance. This implies that Tanaka constructs the regional governments as the “good guys,” in contrast to the national government. As a local governor of a region, Tanaka’s motive for this is self-evident.

7. Conclusion

Political discourse may first appear to be a rather specific genre, one not very accessible to the general public in ordinary conversations; however, we can see in the utterances examined in this study that the use of quotations generates a more conversational, more “ordinary,” more accessible kind of speech. From a socio-pragma-linguistic perspective, the fact that Japanese political figures use quotations as rhetorical devices in media-mediated discourse is an interesting and important finding. Because of the linguistic availability of a continuum of quotation patterns in Japanese, conversational quality can be turned up or down, depending on the speaker’s adjustment of perspectives, modality usage, use of quotation markings, and following predicates. When the quotation is more conversational, then the quoted utterance will have a lively voice and can contribute various pragmatic effects at the time it is uttered. The study tells us, in short, that because of the particular versatility available in the Japanese language, quotations are resourceful for speakers as an interactional rhetorical device (Hutchby, 1996; Bilmes, 1999).

References


Abbreviations

Cop  Copula
IP    Interactional Particle
FP    Interactional final particle
GL    Goal Particle
LK    Linking Particle (between Nominals)
NG    Negation Marker
Nom   Nominalizer
Obj   Object Marker
Q     Question Marker
Qrt   Quotative Particle / Marker
Subj  Subject Marker
Top   Topic Marker

Glossed verbs contain their tense/aspect in the word translation.