A Non-Scalar Account of Apparent Gradience: Evidence from Yo and Ne

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1 . Introduction

In Japanese, there is a set of lexical items called sentence-final particles (SFPs) which convey the speaker's attitude toward what is being said. SFPs do not contribute to the truth-conditional meanings of utterances. As can be seen in (1), all the sentences have the same truth-conditional meaning: they are true if Taroo has the property of singing well. But the SFPs in (1) are used to express different attitudes of the speaker.

(1) a. **y o**
         Taroo wa uta   ga umai   *yo*.[1]
         TP   singing SB be good at
         'Taro sings well, (I tell you).'

     b. **z o**
         Taroo wa uta ga umai *zo*.
         'Taroo sings well, (damn it)!'

     c. **wa**
         Taroo wa uta ga umai *wa*.
         'Oh, Taroo sings well.....'

     d. **sa**
         Taroo wa uta ga umai *sa*.
         'Taroo sings well, (naturally).'

     e. **ne**
         Taroo wa uta ga umai *ne*.
         'Taroo sings well, doesn't he?'

Since SFPs convey the speaker's attitude toward the utterance, and an utterance with a particular SFP is more appropriate in one con-

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[1] In this paper the following abbreviations are used: SB = subject,
TP = topic, GN = genitive, COP = copula.

text than another, pragmatic factors, such as beliefs, intentions, and goals, are essential in interpreting an utterance with SFPs.

Previous analyses of SFPs claimed that the difference among them lay in the degree of strength of the speaker's conviction toward the illocutionary force of the sentence to which they were attached (Uyeno:1971, Kendall:1985, Yoshimoto:1992). This paper discusses the problems of such scalar analyses and introduces an alternative approach in which the pragmatic principles that govern the use of each SFP are characterized independently.

2.   Scalar analyses

When the speaker believes that the addressee has considered the proposition but believes it to be false, the speaker may want to convince the addressee that the speaker is right and the addressee is wrong. When the goal of the speaker is to convince the addressee that the speaker is right and the addressee is wrong, *yo* and *ne* appear to have the following contrasting effects. With *yo*, the speaker appears to be stating strongly to the addressee that he should believe the proposition, while with *ne*, the speaker appears to be suggesting hesitantly to the addressee the he should believe the proposition, as illustrated in (2).

(2) a. Kono zu   no   ichi   wa guai   warui *yo*.
         this   graph   GN position TP convenience bad
         The position of this graph is not good, *I tell you*.'

    b. Kono zu no ichi wa guai warui *ne*.
         'The position of this graph is not good, *don't you think?*'

This fact motivated scalar analyses like Yoshimoto (1992). Yoshimoto (1992) focuses on the difference between *yo* and *ne* and claims that *yo* strengthens the illocutionary meaning, while *ne* blurs the force of the utterance.

The scalar approach like Yoshimoto (1992) is problematic. 1) It stipulates where each particle is placed on a scale, and cannot explain why the particles are ordered that way as opposed to another. Thus, it cannot explain why *yo* seems to strengthen while *ne* seems to blur the illocutionary force. 2) It assumes that SFPs reflect the same attitude and differ only in the degree of strength of the illocutionary force. However, each particle reflects a different attitude, as will be shown in the following section.

This paper shows that *yo* and *ne* reflect different attitudes of the speaker. Yet, from the use conditions for *yo* and *ne*, the scalar relation follows that *yo* seems to strengthen and *ne* seems to blur the illocutionary force of stating or directing. Since the scalar relation follows from independent use conditions, the approach in which each SFP is characterized independently is more explanatory than the scalar analyses, which merely stipulate a scalar ranking.

3 .   Independent principle approach

I hypothesize that the use of *yo* and *ne* is governed by the principles in (3) and (4) respectively.[2]

(3)   ***Yo*-principle**
The use of the particle *yo* reflects the speaker's belief that the addressee is NOT committed to the state of affairs denoted by the propositional content of the statement or directive preceding the particle.

(4)   ***Ne*-principle**
The use of the particle *ne* reflects the speaker's belief that the addressee IS committed to the state of affairs denoted by the propositional content of the statement or directive preceding the particle.

Commitment is defined following Lu (forthcoming). When one is committed to something, one is willing to be held responsible for it. When making a statement or directive, the speaker is committed to the speech act, and thus, willing to be held responsible for making the statement or directive. Similarly, an addressee would be committed to, and thus, willing to be held responsible for:
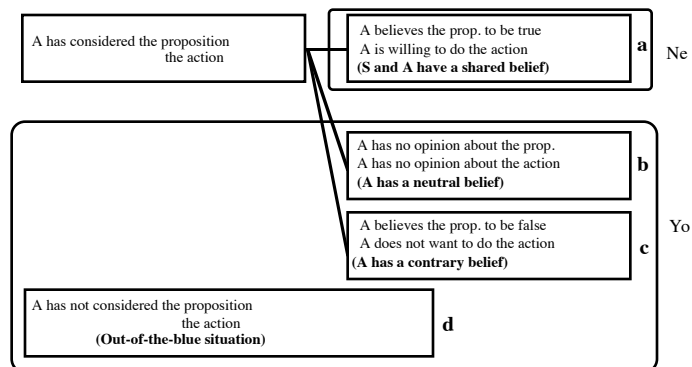
A.   a state of affairs denoted by the propositional content of a STATEMENT if the addressee believes the proposition expressed by the statement to be true.

B.   a state of affairs denoted by the propositional content of a DIRECTIVE if the addressee believes the addressee will perform the action expressed by the directive.

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[2]For a discussion on the combined SFP *yone*, see Kose (in prep).

Since the *ne*-principle states that the speaker believes that the addressee *is* committed to the state of affairs denoted by the propositional content, the use of *ne* reflects the speaker's belief that 1) the addressee believes the proposition expressed by the statement to be true, *or* 2) the addressee is willing to perform the action expressed by the directive (Case a in (5)).

(5)

A has considered the proposition the action	A believes the prop. to be true A is willing to do the action **(S and A have a shared belief)**	**a** Ne
	A has no opinion about the prop. A has no opinion about the action **(A has a neutral belief)**	**b**
	A believes the prop. to be false A does not want to do the action **(A has a contrary belief)**	**c** Yo
A has not considered the proposition the action **(Out-of-the-blue situation)**		**d**

Since the *yo*-principle, in contrast to the *ne*-principle, states that the speaker believes that the addressee is NOT committed to the state of affairs denoted by the propositional content, the use of *yo* reflects the speaker's belief that: 1) the addressee does not believe the proposition expressed by the statement to be true, OR 2) the addressee will not perform the action expressed by the directive. The claim that the addressee does not believe the proposition or will not perform the action refers to the following situations: 1) the addressee has not considered the proposition or the action (Case d in (5)), 2) the addressee has considered the proposition or the action but believes the proposition to be false or does not want to do the action (Case c), and 3) the addressee has considered the proposition or the action but has no opinion about them (Case b).

So, according to the independent principle approach, *yo* and *ne* reflect different attitudes of the speaker: The use of *yo* reflects the speaker's belief that the addressee is NOT committed to the propositional content, while the use of *ne* reflects the speaker's belief that the addressee IS committed to the propositional content. Thus, the independent principle approach predicts that *yo* and *ne* have different

distributions. That is, there are situations where one particle can be used but not the other. On the other hand, the scalar approach like Yoshimoto (1992) predicts that *yo* and *ne* have the same distribution and the two differ only in the strength of the illocutionary force. Section 3 shows that the *yo*-principle and the *ne*-principle correctly predict that *yo* and *ne* have different distributions. It also shows that the two principles explain the effects of *yo* and *ne* that cannot be explained in terms of strengthening or weakening of the illocutionary force.

3.1.   Out-of-the-blue situations

Since the speaker indicates with *yo* that he believes that the addressee does not believe the proposition or will not perform the directed action, *yo* can be used when the speaker believes that the addressee has not had chance to have any belief about the proposition or the directed action (i.e., in an 'out-of-the-blue' situation, Case d in (5)).

For example, a student A, who does not usually say anything when he comes back to his room, may say something with *yo* to his roommate B right after he comes home in order to catch B's attention, as in (6). Since A does not usually say anything, his friend B cannot have any belief about what A will say.

(6)   Kyoo boku omoshiroi   mono   mita   *yo*.
         today I   interesting   thing   saw
         '*Hey*, I saw something interesting today.'

By using *yo*, the speaker highlights that there is a gap between what the speaker believes and what the speaker believes the addressee believes (i.e., the speaker believes the proposition, but the speaker believes the addressee has not considered the proposition). This act of highlighting the gap has the effect of catching the addressee's attention. Without *yo*, the student does not sound like he is trying to catch his roommate's attention and may sound like he is just talking to himself.

If the use of *ne* reflects the speaker's belief that the addressee believes the proposition to be true, *ne* will not be used when the speaker believes the addressee has not had a chance to consider the proposition. If the speaker believes the addressee has had no chance to consider the proposition, the speaker believes the addressee cannot have a belief about the truth of the proposition. Thus, the

speaker will not think the addressee believes the proposition to be true. Thus in an out-of-the-blue-telling example (7), the speaker will not use *ne*, as in (7a), because he knows that his roommate has no way of knowing what he saw that day, and thus cannot believe whether he saw something interesting is true or not.

(7)   a. #Kyoo boku omoshiroi   mono mita *ne*.
            today   I   interesting   thing   saw
            'I saw something interesting today, *right?*'

      b.   Kyoo boku omoshiroi   mono mita.
            'I saw something interesting today.'

If *ne* is not used as in (7b), the speaker does not sound like he thinks the addressee knows that he saw something interesting, and is simply stating he saw something interesting that day. Thus, (7b) is appropriate in this situation.

3.2.   Shared belief situations

The *yo*-principle states that the use of *yo* reflects the speaker's belief that the addressee does not believe the proposition expressed by a statement to be true. Thus, the *yo*-principle predicts that *yo* will not be used when the speaker believes that the addressee also believes that a proposition is true (i.e., the speaker and the addressee share a belief, Case a in (5)). For example, suppose the two students have walked several miles to get to their dormitory because they missed a bus, complaining to each other that they hate to walk such a long way. Since they share the belief that they walked a long way, they can say the following without *yo*, as in (8a).

(8)   a. Kyoo wa takusan aruita.
            today TP a lot   walked
            'We walked a lot today.'

      B.   #Kyoo wa takusan aruita *yo*.
            '*But,* we walked a lot today.'
            '*Hey,* we walked a lot today.'

If *yo* is used as in (8b), the speaker sounds like he thinks his friend does not think they have walked a long way. The speaker sounds like he believes the addressee believes the opposite of what he

thinks (i.e., the addressee believes they did not walk a long way) or the addressee has no opinion about whether they walked a lot, or the addressee does not know anything about what the speaker is saying. Thus, the utterance with *yo* is appropriate when the speaker is trying to convince the addressee that they walked a lot that day. Also, the utterance with *yo* is appropriate when the speaker tells her friend in the dorm, who does not know at all about what happened to him.

Because the *ne*-principle states that the use of *ne* reflects the speaker's belief that the addressee believes the proposition, *ne* can be used if the speaker wants to represent himself as believing that the addressee believes the proposition. So, *ne* can be used in a shared-walk situation (9).

(9)   Kyoo wa takusan aruita *ne*.
        today TP a lot   walked
        'We walked a lot today, *didn't we?*'

If *ne* is not used in (9), the speaker sounds like he simply blurted out what he is thinking without representing the sharedness between the speaker and the addressee.

The distributional difference between *yo* and *ne* in an out-of-the-blue situation and a shared belief situation cannot be explained if the two particles are considered to reflect the same attitude of the speaker, as assumed by the scalar analysis.

3.3. A sincere answer to a sincere question

The *yo*-principle and the *ne*-principle predict that *yo* can be used but *ne* cannot be used in answering a sincere wh-question in a sincere way. This section first discusses what the speaker is considered to believe when he gives a sincere answer to a sincere question. Then, it shows how the *yo*-principle and the *ne*-principle predict *yo* can be used but *ne* cannot be used in giving a sincere answer to a sincere question.

This section assumes that a wh-question expresses an open proposition that lacks an element. For example, the wh-question, 'What time is it?' is considered to express an open proposition, 'It is X o'clock', where X refers to what the questioner is asking for. A sincere answer to a sincere wh-question expresses a filled proposition. For example, an answer to the above question, 'It's nine o'clock.' expresses the filled proposition, 'It is nine o'clock.', where what the questioner asked for is filled in.

(10) a. What time is it? —>'It is X o'clock.'
        (open proposition)

  b.   It's nine o'clock. —> 'It is nine o'clock.'
        (filled proposition)

In answering a sincere wh-question like (10a), the answerer (the speaker) believes the questioner (the addressee) has considered the open proposition and expects a filled proposition, but does not know which of the possible filled propositions is true. Therefore, the answerer believes that the questioner is not committed to the filled proposition (i.e., the answerer believes that the questioner does not believe the filled proposition to be true).

Based on the above assumptions, the *yo*-principle predicts that *yo* can be used in giving a sincere answer to a sincere question: If the use of *yo* reflects the speaker's belief that the addressee does not believe the proposition to be true, *yo* can be used after a filled proposition constituting a sincere answer to a sincere question. Thus, *yo* can be used to tell a questioner who has asked what time it is, as in (11).

(11) X: Ima   nan ji?
        now what o'clock
        'What time is it?'

  Y: Ku ji   da   *yo*.
        nine o'clock COP
        'It's nine o'clock.'

In contrast, the *ne*-principle predicts that *ne* will not be used in giving a sincere answer to a sincere question. According to the *ne*-principle, by using *ne*, the speaker indicates that he thinks the addressee believes the proposition. Since the speaker indicates that he thinks the addressee already believes the proposition by using *ne*, *ne* will not be used in giving a sincere answer to a sincere question. Thus, in the same situation as (11), where the speaker tells the questioner who asked what time it is, the speaker will not use *ne*, as predicted.

(12) X: Ima   nan ji?
        now what o'clock
        'What time is it?'

> Y: #Ku ji   da *ne*.
>   nine o'clock   COP
>   'It's nine o'clock, *isn't it?*'

In some situations, however, *ne* can actually be used in giving a sincere answer to a sincere question. This fact motivated Hasunuma (1988) and Kinsui (1993) to change the hypothesis that has the condition that the use of *ne* indicates the speaker's belief that the addressee knows the proposition expressed by the speaker's utterance. However, the fact that *ne* occurs in giving a sincere answer to a sincere question can still be explained by the *ne*-principle, which has the condition that the speaker believes that the addressee believes the proposition. This is because the person whom the speaker is addressing by using *ne* can be the speaker himself. In other words, whom the speaker is addressing by using *ne* has to be inferred. Whom the speaker is looking at at the time of the utterance (whether the speaker is directly looking at the questioner's eyes or not) helps to understand whether the use of *ne* is directed toward the questioner or the speaker himself. If the speaker's use of *ne* is understood as directed toward the speaker himself, the speaker is considered to be interacting with himself while giving a sincere answer to the questioner.

Not only does the *ne*-principle predict that *ne* can be used in a sincere answer to a sincere question if it is inferred that *ne* is directed toward the speaker himself, but it also predicts with what kind of question the speaker may use *ne* in giving a sincere answer to a sincere question. If the speaker is understood as addressing himself when he gives a sincere answer to a sincere question, the speaker may use *ne* when he does not mind making it explicit that the speaker is interacting with himself when he answers to the questioner. Thus, the speaker will not use *ne* in answering a question that the speaker believes everyone believes he should be able to answer without conscious attention. For example, when the speaker is asked what his name is, as in (13), he is expected to be able to give an immediate answer.

(13) X: Anata no onamae wa?
          you   GN name   TP
          "What is your name?'

Y: #Nakamura Tarou desu *ne*.[3]
                                        COP
       'Nakamura Tarou, right?'

In answering questions like (13), it is predicted that the speaker will not use *ne*, because the use of *ne* makes it sound like the speaker has to ask for confirmation from himself about his own name. Since the use of *ne* in giving a sincere answer makes the speaker sound like he is not sure about it and needs to think about it, the use of *ne* in giving a sincere answer is appropriate in a situation where the speaker has amnesia and is not sure about his own name.

        If it is inferred that the speaker is addressing himself when giving a sincere answer to a sincere question, the use of *ne* indicates that the speaker believes that the addressee (which is himself) believes that the proposition expressed by an answer to the question is true. Since the speaker indicates that he is interacting with himself, the use of *ne* is appropriate when the speaker is answering a question that he believes everybody believes he may have to think about before answering. For example, for questions that the speaker believes everyone believes would require the answerer to calculate something, to search his memory, or to find appropriate words to express what he thinks, the speaker thinks everyone thinks it is natural for him to think about the answer. When giving an answer to this kind of question, the speaker may use *ne* in giving a sincere answer to let the questioner know that he has to think about the answer. For instance, when a worker who has been working for a while is asked how long he has been working, he may use *ne* to let the questioner know he has to calculate, as in (14).

(14) X: Tsutomete nan nen me desu ka?
              work   what year th   COP   Q
              'How long have you been working?'

      Y: Kotoshi de   jyuukyuunenme desu *ne*.[4]
            this year   19th year   COP
            '(*Let me see*...) This is my 19th year.'

If *ne* is not used in Y's answer in (14), Y does not sound like he has to take time to calculate and sounds like he knows the answer off the top of his head.

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[3]This example is taken from Kinsui (1993).
[4]A similar example is in Kinsui (1993).

The *yo*-principle and the *ne*-principle can explain why *yo* occurs, but *ne* does not occur in giving a sincere answer to a sincere question when it is obvious that *ne* is directed toward the questioner. The *ne*-principle can also explain the fact that *ne* can be used in giving a sincere answer to a sincere question if the speaker does not mind indicating that he is interacting with himself when he answers the question. However, these facts cannot be explained if it is assumed that *yo* and *ne* reflect the same attitude and differ only in the strength of illocutionary force.

Section 3.1. through 3.3. showed that the differences in distribution and effects between *yo* and *ne* follow from the *yo*-principle and the *ne*-principle. However, these differences cannot be explained by a scalar approach that assumes that SFPs show the same attitude and differ only in the degrees of strength of the illocutionary force of the sentence. Therefore the scalar approach cannot correctly explain the uses of SFPs.

4.   Different degrees of illocutionary force follow from the two principles

Section 3 presented cases where the distribution and the effects of *yo* and *ne* differ, and showed that SFPs reflect different attitudes of the speaker. Section 4 shows that even though SFPs show different attitudes, the facts that motivated scalar analyses follow from the two principles.

When the speaker believes that the addressee has considered the proposition or action but believes the proposition to be false or does not want to perform the action, the speaker may want to convince the addressee that the proposition is true or convince the addressee to perform the action. When the goal of the speaker is to get the addressee, who has contrary beliefs, to believe that the proposition is true or to convince the addressee to perform the action, *yo* and *ne* have the following contrasting effects. By using *yo*, the speaker indicates that he believes that the addressee does not believe the proposition or the addressee believes he will not perform the action. Thus, with *yo*, the speaker represents himself as someone who has not achieved his goal of getting the addressee to believe that the proposition is true or that the addressee will perform the action. This act makes the speaker appear more insistent in stating the proposition or directing the addressee to do something. In contrast, using *ne* after the statement indicates that the speaker thinks the addressee already believes the proposition or is willing to per-

form the action. Thus, with *ne*, the speaker represents himself as someone who has already achieved his goal of making the addressee believe that the proposition is true or that the addressee will perform the action. Therefore, with *ne*, the speaker sounds less insistent.

For example, if a speaker wants to convince his addressee, who is satisfied with her presentation, that her presentation of a graph is bad, the speaker may use *yo* to state strongly to the addressee that her presentation is bad, as in (15a).

(15) a. Kono zu   no ichi   wa guai   warui *yo*.
        this graph GN position TP convenience bad
        'The position of this graph is not good, *I tell you*.'

On the other hand, if the speaker wants to avoid confrontation with the addressee while convincing her that what she believes is wrong, the speaker may use *ne* to state softly to the addressee as in (15b).

(15) b. Kono zu no ichi wa guai warui *ne*.
        'The position of this graph is not good, *don't you think?*'

As an example of the use of *ne* after a directive, suppose the addressee is not willing to accept the speaker's expensive gift because the addressee feels bad about receiving an expensive gift from the speaker. If the speaker really wants to get the addressee to accept his gift, the speaker may use *yo* to direct strongly that the addressee should take the gift, as in (16a).

(16) a. Uketotte   kudasai   *yo*.
        receive   please
        'Please take it*!*'

In contrast, if the speaker wants to avoid confrontation with the addressee, the speaker may use *ne* to direct softly that the addressee take the gift, as in (16b).

(16) b. Uketotte   kudasai   *ne*.
        receive   please
        'Please take it, *won't you?*'

Thus, the fact that the speaker appears to be stating or directing strongly to the addressee with *yo*, and appears to be suggesting weakly to the addressee with *ne* — the fact that motivated scalar

analyses like Yoshimoto (1992) — follows from the *yo*-principle and the *ne*-principle. Since different degrees of strength of illocutionary force follow from the difference between the *yo*-principle and the *ne*-principle, the independent principles can explain why *yo* and *ne* appear to differ in degree in some situations. Thus, this pragmatic approach explains what the scalar approach had to stipulate.

5 .   Conclusion

The independent principle approach, in which each SFP is characterized independently, correctly captures the uses of each SFP and is more explanatory than the scalar approach. In the independent principle approach, different principles characterize the use of each SFP and thus, this approach correctly captures the fact that SFPs reflect different attitudes rather than different degrees of the same attitude. Even though SFPs reflect different attitudes, the fact that motivated the scalar analyses follows from the difference between the two principles. Since a scalar ranking follows from the two independent principles, it does not have to be stipulated. Thus, the independent principle approach is more explanatory than the scalar approach.

Since the present approach postulates independent principles for each SFP, it predicts that other SFPs do not necessarily differ in the same dimension. As argued elsewhere (Kose: 1997), the difference among *yo*, *zo*, and *wa* is how directly the speaker can indicate that he believes the addressee should believe the proposition expressed by the utterance. The difference among *yo*, *zo*, and *wa* is not the same as the difference between *yo* and *ne*, which is whether the speaker represents himself as someone who has already achieved his goal or not. Thus, the present approach predicts that there will not necessarily be a single scale on which all SFPs can be placed, but there may be many separate scalar relations between particles.

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