Japanese *janai* in Confirmation Sentences

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Abstract

This paper examines Tokyo Japanese particle *janai* in a sentence for confirmation. The particle [proposition]-*janai* is used to add a modal meaning, 'you know, [the proposition] is true, right?', and to give the topic to talk about. The speaker expects that the addressee already knows the proposition. By a process of elimination to particles other than the proposition, the paper presents that the expectation comes from the *janai* particle. Also, it explores why *noda*, which nominalizes the proposition attached to it (Noda 1997), cannot appear in the same sentence as *janai*. It is argued that *noda* cannot appear in p-*janai* sentences because there is a semantic conflict between *noda* and *janai*. This analysis supports the proposal that *janai* signals the speaker's expectation.

1   Introduction

When *janai* is used in Tokyo Japanese sentences such as 2, the speaker expects the addressee to know that the proposition is true, which is called '*janai* sentences' in this paper. An example context is 1. The '↑↓' stands for rising-falling intonation. The pitch track for sentence 2 is shown in Figure 1[1].

(1)   Context:
        The speaker has heard that Hanako will come to the party tomorrow. The speaker thinks that they and the addressee have both heard about that. The speaker wants to talk about it, and they utter (2).

(2)   *Janai* sentence
        Hanako   kuru-janai-desu-↑ka↓
        Hanako   come-JANAI-POLITE-↑KA↓
        'You know, Hanako will come, right?'
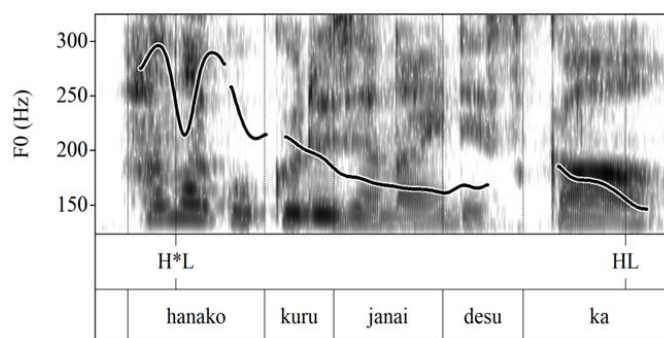   #'Is Hanako coming?'

Figure 1: Pitch track of sentence 2

The speaker's expectation is observed in that sentences in 3 are natural answers for 2 since the addressee seems to have known that Hanako will come.

(3)   Addressee's possible reply for 2

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[1] All figures of the pitch tracks in this paper are made by using Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2021).

a. *Un,   Hanako kuru-rasii-desu-ne,   sorede?*
   Yes   Hanako come-seem-POLITE-SFP   then
   'Yes, it seems that Hanako will come, and then?'

b. *E,   soo-nan-desu-ka.   Siri-mas-en-desi-ta.*
   Oh   that-is-POLITE-KA   know-POLITE-NEG-POLITE-PAST
   'Oh, really? I did not know that.'

If the addressee did not know that Hanako would come, 3b, showing the addressee's surprise, would be a natural answer. Both answers indicate that the addressee senses the existence of the speaker's expectation mentioned above. Thus, one observation on *janai* sentences to be dealt with in this paper is that they signal the speaker's expectation that the addressee also knows the proposition is true.

Another observation is that *janai* cannot appear in the same sentence with *noda*, a particle that nominalizes the preceding part (Noda 1997). The observation is illustrated in 4. No matter what order *janai* and *noda* are in, they cannot co-occur in the same sentence[2].

(4)   Ungrammaticality of *janai* with *noda*

a. *Hanako*   *kuru-janai-desu-↑ka↓*
   Hanako   come-JANAI-POLITE-↑KA↓
   'You know, Hanako will come, right?'

b. **Hanako*   *kuru-N-janai-desu-↑ka↓*
   Hanako   come-NODA-JANAI-POLITE-↑KA↓

c. **Hanako*   *kuru-janai-N-desu-↑ka↓*
   Hanako   come-JANAI-NODA-POLITE-↑KA↓

d. **Hanako*   *kuru-N-janai-N-desu-↑ka↓*
   Hanako   come- NODA-JANAI- NODA-POLITE-↑KA↓

In this paper, we analyze *janai* sentences which are constructed as [$_{IP}$[$_{VP}$[DP V]]]-*janai* (*-desu-ka*)] with rising-falling intonation. Different intonations in *janai* sentences are out of the scope of this paper.[3] We first explore where the speaker's expectation comes from in section 3.1. Then, in section 3.2 discusses the incompatibility of *janai* with *noda*. Section 4 is the concluding remarks. Before going to these discussions, let us briefly review some literature on *janai* and related sentences in section 2.

2   Background

According to Rieser (2017), *janai (-ka)* and a similar expression *jan* are both reduced forms of negated copula *dewanai* and a question marker *-ka* since all the forms are available and reconstructible. All three forms are shown in (5) adopted from Rieser (2017: 186).

(5)   *Dewanai*   (*-ka*)   >   *janai*   (*-ka*)   >   *jan*
        COP.NEG   INT   COP.NEG   INT   jan

Rieser (2017) mainly explores *jan* and reports the similarity with *janai (-ka),* which is the speaker wants to be sure that the addressee and the speaker are sharing the same background information for the following

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[2] *Noda* is pronounced as *nda* at the sentence-final position in a casual speech, or it is pronounced as *n* in the sentence-medial position. In the sentences in 10, *noda* is pronounced as *n*. In sentence 14b, *noda* is pronounced *nda* since it is in the sentence-final position.

[3] *Janai* is grammatical with rising, rising-falling, and falling intonations, but it cannot appear with rising intonation when there is a sentence-final question marker *-ka* at the end of the sentence. This observation shows a parallel pattern with a Japanese modal auxiliary *daroo* since *daroo*, too, cannot appear in a construction *daroo-ka↑* as analyzed in Hara (To appear).

discourse. *Jan* in this use is similar to *janai (-ka)* sentences.[4] In this literature, however, intonations are not described in detail, and the main scope is *jan*, not *janai* which is the main target of this paper.

In Japanese literature, *janai-ka* is explored and discussed as it signals the speaker's assumption that the proposition in the sentence already exists in the addressee's knowledge (Adachi 1999). However, there seem to be no studies exploring why *janai* is incompatible with *noda*.

Other relevant sentence types are negative polar questions. Negative polar questions are relevant to *janai* sentences since *janai (-ka)* contains *nai* ('not'). Two types of *nai* in interrogative sentences have been investigated semantically and phonologically (Ito & Oshima 2014, Hirayama 2016). *Janai* in this paper is different from them since the two *nai* in the literature do not convey the speaker's expectation that the addressee already knows that the proposition is true. Also, *nai* in negative polar questions is compatible with both *noda* and rising intonations, which is different from *janai* in this paper.

To sum up, *janai (-ka)* is investigated in some literature, but the incompatibility with other particles of *janai* sentences remains to be explored. This paper thus explores why *janai* cannot co-occur with *noda*.

3   *Janai* sentences

3.1   *Speaker's expectation in janai sentences*   Firstly, the next two subsections consider some candidates that signal the speaker's expectation, and conclude that it is *janai* that bears it. There are three particles other than a proposition that thus have a possibility to bear the speaker's expectation. The three candidates to explore are shown in 6.

(6)   Three candidates to bear speaker's expectations
   a.   sentence-final -*ka*
   b.   sentence-final rising-falling intonation
   c.   *janai*

3.1.1   *Sentence-final -ka*   Does a sentence-final -*ka* bear the speaker's expectation? If so, -*ka* cannot be dropped in any form of *janai* sentences that signal the speaker's expectation.

As shown in 7, however, *desu-ka* can be dropped if the *janai* sentence is uttered in casual contexts. The pitch track of 7 is shown in Figure 2 where the HL% tone still remains in *nai* of *janai*. Possible replies are the same as 3.

(7)   *Janai* sentence without *desu-ka*
   Hanako   kuru-ja↑nai↓
   Hanako   come-JA↑NAI↓
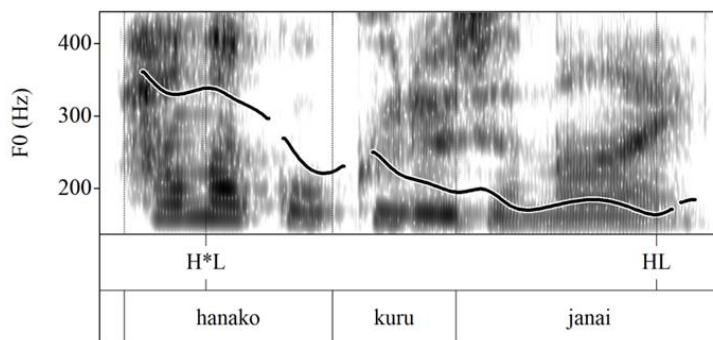   'You know, Hanako will come, right?'

Figure 2: Pitch track of sentence (7)

Since, the addressee's possible replies to *janai* sentences can be the same as the possible replies to *janai* sentences with *desu-ka*, there is still the speaker's expectation that the addressee must have already known that the proposition is true. Because *desu-ka* can be dropped with the expectation remaining, -*ka* does not bear the speaker's expectation.

3.1.2   *Sentence-final rising intonation* There are some possibilities that a sentence-final rising-falling intonation plays a role in the expectation. Because sentence 7 has HL% at the end of the sentence, although the

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[4] *Jan* shows some similar behaviors as *janai*, which is summarized in 22 of section 4. This paper investigates *janai*, but the analysis on the characteristics of *janai* and the ungrammaticality with *noda* can be applied to *jan* as well.

sentence-final particles *desu-ka* are dropped. What *Hanako kuru janai-desu-ka* and *Hanako kuru janai* have in common aside from the proposition 'Hanako kuru' is two parts: *janai* and rising-falling intonation in the sentence-final position. Which bears the expectation?

 Janai sentences without *desu-ka* can be uttered with rising intonation such as in 8, whose pitch track is shown in Figure 3. The speaker's expectation remains in this sentence since the possible replies of the addressee are the same as 3.

(8) Janai sentence with rising intonation
    Hanako   *kuru-janai↑*
    Hanako   come-JANAI↑
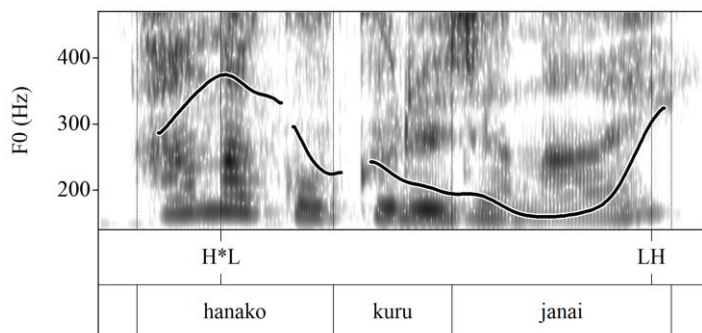   'You know, Hanako will come, right?'

Figure 3: Pitch track of sentence 8

Since rising-falling intonation can be replaced with rising intonation, rising-falling intonation cannot bear the expectation. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that *janai* bears the expectation.

 To sum up, the speaker expects the addressee to share the same belief in confirmation sentences with *janai*. While this expectation is maintained, *desu-ka* can be dropped in 7. It is also discussed that rising-falling intonation does not seem to play a role in the expectation because in some cases the intonation can be replaced with rising intonation such as in 8.

3.1.3 *Janai* Therefore, *janai*, not *desu-ka* or a rising-falling intonation, signals the expectation. Here, proposal (9) about the expectation *janai* signals is shown.

(9) *Janai*: *janai* signals that the speaker expects the addressee to share the same belief in confirmation
    sentences with *janai*

 The proposal 9 is in line with Adachi (1999) which analyzes that the function of *janai-ka* is to give the information to the addressee who seems to already know it, and make the knowledge of them equal. Adachi (1999) observed various types of *janai-ka* sentences, and summarized its function. This paper proposes 9 by a process of elimination, and supports what Adachi (1999) reports in that they both analyze *janai* as signaling shared information. The fact that Adachi (1999) and this paper conclude similarly by different way of investigation strengthen the proposal. Also, this paper further investigates the ungrammaticality of *janai* with *noda* in section 3.2. The analysis further supports the plausibility of the proposal 9.

3.2 *Ungrammaticality with noda* As mentioned in the introduction, *janai* in confirmation sentences cannot appear in the same sentence as *noda*. The observation is shown in 10.

(10) Ungrammaticality of *janai* with *noda*

   a.   *Hanako*   *kuru-janai-desu-↑ka↓*
       Hanako   come-JANAI-POLITE-↑KA↓
       'You know, Hanako will come, right?'

   b.   **Hanako*   *kuru-N-janai-desu-↑ka↓*
       Hanako   come-NODA-JANAI-POLITE-↑KA↓

   c.   **Hanako*   *kuru-janai-N-desu-↑ka↓*

	Hanako	come-JANAI-NODA-POLITE-↑KA↓
d.	*Hanako	*kuru-N-janai-N-desu-↑ka↓*
	Hanako	come-NODA-JANAI- NODA-POLITE-↑KA↓

Sentence 10a is grammatical, but all the other three 10b, 10c and 10d are ungrammatical no matter what order *janai* and *noda* are in. Also, this ungrammaticality of *janai* with *noda* is observed no matter how many arguments the verb takes. This is shown in 11 and 12.

(11)   Ungrammaticality of *janai* with *noda* in sentences with a transitive verb

a.	*Hanako hon-o*		*yon-da-janai-desu-↑ka↓*
	Hanako hon-ACC		read-PAST-JANAI- POLITE-↑KA↓

'You know, Hanako read a book, right?'

b.	*Hanako	hon-o	*yon-da-N-janai-desu-↑ka↓*
	Hanako	hon-ACC	read-PAST-NODA-JANAI-POLITE-↑KA↓

c.	*Hanako	hon-o	*yon-da-janai-N-desu-↑ka↓*
	Hanako	hon-ACC	read-PAST-JANAI-NODA-POLITE-↑KA↓

d.	*Hanako	hon-o	*yon-da-N-janai-N-desu-↑ka↓*
	Hanako	hon-ACC	read-PAST-NODA-JANAI-NODA-POLITE-↑KA↓

(12)   Ungrammaticality of *janai* with *noda* in sentences with a ditransitive verb

a.	*Hanako*	*Taro-ni*	*tegami-o*	*kaku-janai-desu-↑ka↓*
	Hanako	Taro-DAT	letter-ACC	write-JANAI-POLITE-↑KA↓

'You know, Hanako writes a letter to Taroo, right?'

b.	*Hanako	Taro-ni	tegami-o	*kaku-N-janai-desu-↑ka↓*
	Hanako	Taro-DAT	letter-ACC	write-NODA-JANAI-POLITE-↑KA↓

c.	*Hanako	Taro-ni	tegami-o	*kaku-janai-N-desu-↑ka↓*
	Hanako	Taro-DAT	letter-ACC	write-JANAI-NODA-POLITE-↑KA↓

d.	*Hanako	Taro-ni	tegami-o	*kaku-N-janai-N-desu-↑ka↓*
	Hanako	Taro-DAT	letter-ACC	write-NODA-JANAI-NODA-POLITE-↑KA↓

Japanese learners often utter *janai* sentences with *noda* as confirmation sentences. *Noda* can appear with many other particles but is incompatible with *janai*, which is interesting to analyze. This section explores the function of *noda* in some literature is reviewed, and then an additional aspect of *noda*. Based on these functions, it is discussed why *janai* and *noda* cannot co-occur in the same sentence.

3.2.1 *Functions of noda*   This section discusses that *noda* signals that 1) the proposition attached to *noda* is a belief of the speaker, and 2) the proposition is new information to the addressee.

3.2.1.1 *Noda signaling the belief of the speaker*   There is much literature about *noda* in Japanese, one of which is that published by Noda (1997). She claimed that *noda* nominalizes the part to which *noda* is attached. Ijima (2010) reviewed literature on *noda* and states that the basic function of *noda* is to show there is an owner of the proposition attached to *noda*. When *noda* is used for declaratives, Ijima (2010) notes, it expresses the speaker's belief. Here is an example 14 and the context 13 to explain this point.

(13)   *Context: The speaker was invited to a picnic by her friend and she came to the meeting place, not knowing who other than herself will come. The meeting time has come, but her friend Hanako is not there. The speaker asks another friend about Hanako.*

(14)   Sentence with *noda*
a.	*#Are,*	*Hanako-wa*	*ko-nai.*
	Oh	Hanako-TOP	come-NEG

'Oh,   Hanako does not come'

    b.   *Are,   Hanako-wa   ko-nai-**nda.***
        Oh,   Hanako-TOP   come-NEG-**NODA**
        'Oh,   (I realized that) Hanako does not come'

When 14a, the one without *noda*, is uttered, the speaker merely describes what is likely true in the actual world. Thus, in this context 13, it is infelicitous because she does not know who will come. On the other hand, when the sentence is uttered with noda as in 14b, it is felicitous because it signals that the speaker realized Hanako would not come based on evidence the speaker saw; Hanako is not there. The contrast between 14a and 14b explains the description of *noda* above. That is, when *noda* is used in declarative sentences, it signals that the speaker believes the preceding proposition is true.

3.2.1.2 *Noda signaling new information to an addressee*   Additionally, here is another discussion about the function of *noda*. When *noda* is used in declaratives, it signals not only that the speaker believes the proposition, but also that the addressee does not know it. In other words, *noda* is used where the proposition is not shared by the speaker and the addressee, and only the speaker should know that. To illustrate this characteristic of *noda*, here is an example sentence 16 in context 15.

(15)   *Context: Hanako and Taro went to the same party together last Sunday. The next day, they meet on campus and Hanako starts talking about the party.*

(16)
    Hanako: *#Kinoo   watasi   paatii   it-ta-**nda***
                Yesterday   I   party   go-PAST-**NODA**
                'Actually, I went to a party yesterday.'

Here, Hanako cannot use a *noda* sentence since Taro and Hanako went to the same party together, which means Taro must know that Hanako was there as well. When there is no evidence that Taro knows it, a *noda* sentence can be used[5] as 18 in the context 17.

(17)   *Context: Hanako went to a party with her friend. The next day, Hanako meets Taro for the first time in a while. They start talking, and Hanako talks about the party she went to.*

(18)
    Hanako: *Kinoo   watasi   paatii   it-ta-**nda.***
                Yesterday   I   party   go-PAST-**NODA**
                'Actually, I went to a party yesterday.'

In this context 17, Hanako can use a *noda* sentence because she has not shared any information about the party with Taro in advance. The two contexts 15 and 17 are different in that the proposition attached to *noda* is shared (in 15) or not (in 17). Here, a function of *noda* is summarized in 19.

(19)   *Noda* in declaratives signals that

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[5] In the sentence 18, the intonation of the *noda* sentence is a plateau in a sentence-final vowel [da]. A *noda* sentence with this intonation signals that the speaker thinks the addressee does not know the information. There is another intonation possible in *noda* sentences; falling intonation. A *noda* sentence with a falling intonation signals that the speaker just heard new information from the addressee. Thus, a *noda* sentence with falling intonation can be used as a reply to the sentence 18.

    Hanako: *Kinoo   watasi   paatii   it-ta-nda.* (=18)
                Yesterday   I   party   go-PAST-NODA
                'Actually, I went to a party yesterday.'

    Taro: *Hee,   kinoo   paatii   it-ta-nda* (with a falling intonatio).
             Oh   yesterday party   go-PAST-NODA
             'Oh really, you went to a party yesterday.'

Even if the intonation is a falling intonation, the *noda* sentence signals that Taro did not know that Hanako went to a party before he heard the information from Hanako. Thus, with both intonations, *noda* signals that the information is not shared by the addressee before the conversation.

a.   the proposition attached to *noda* is a belief of the speaker
b.   the proposition is new information to the addressee

3.2.2   *Conflict between noda and janai*   *Janai* and *noda* cannot co-occur no matter what order they
are in as shown in 10, which is restated in 20.

(20)   Ungrammaticality of *janai* with *noda*

a.   *Hanako*   *kuru-janai-desu-↑ka↓*
     Hanako   come-JANAI-POLITE-↑KA↓
     'You know, Hanako will come, right?'

b.   **Hanako*   *kuru-N-janai-desu-↑ka↓*
     Hanako   come-NODA-JANAI-POLITE-↑KA↓

c.   **Hanako*   *kuru-janai-N-desu-↑ka↓*
     Hanako   come-JANAI-NODA-POLITE-↑KA↓

d.   **Hanako*   *kuru-N-janai-N-desu-↑ka↓*
     Hanako   come-NODA-JANAI- NODA-POLITE-↑KA↓

Because sentences that include both *noda* and *janai* are ungrammatical regardless of the order in which the two particles appear, the reason that such sentences are ungrammatical should be semantic, not syntactic.

Considering the function of *noda* summarized in 19b in the previous subsection and the proposal 9 on *janai*, the reason that *janai* and *noda* cannot co-occur is that there is a semantic conflict between *janai* and *noda*. As stated in 9, *janai* signals that the proposition is shared by both the speaker and the addressee. However, *noda* signals the speaker's awareness of the proposition, and the belief that the proposition is true cannot be shared by the addressee. They cannot appear together in the same sentence because there is a conflict between *janai* and *noda*; *noda* signals that the proposition cannot be shared, while *janai* signals it must be, which causes the ungrammaticality. This analysis supports the plausibility of the proposal 9 since the proposal explains why *noda* and *janai* cannot appear in the same sentence.

4   Future direction and conclusion

4.1   *Remaining issues*   One point unclear so far is whether ungrammatical sentences with *noda* are equally ungrammatical. Is there any order which is less ungrammatical? If there are some contrasts among the sentences with different orders of *noda* and *janai*, why do they show different ungrammaticality? With the explanation we have provided in this paper, we cannot illustrate these differences because *janai* cannot occur with *noda* no matter what order they are in. How does the order of *noda* and *janai* affect the degree of ungrammaticality?

In addition, it is interesting to look at the interaction with other particles. For example, there are some particles for the sentence-final position in Japanese. However, sentence-final particles other than *-ka* are not grammatical with *janai*, as shown in 21.

(21)   *Janai* sentences with other sentence-final particles
a.   **Hanako*   *kuru-janai-desu-ne*
     Hanako   come-JANAI-POLITE-SFP

b.   *?Hanako*   *kuru-janai-ne*
     Hanako   come-JANAI-SFP

c.   **Hanako*   *kuru-janai-desu-yo*
     Hanako   come-JANAI-POLITE-SFP

d.   *?Hanako*   *kuru-janai-yo*
     Hanako   come-JANAI-SFP

Why is only *-ka* grammatical with *janai* among other sentence-final particles? There must be a constraint for a sentence-final particle in janai sentences.

As shown in 5, there is a more reduced form of *janai*: *jan*. *Jan* shares many features with *janai*. Here is the summary of the similarity between *jan* and *janai* in 22.

(22)   Similarities between *janai* and *jan*
   a.   They signal that the proposition is thought to be true not only by the speaker but also by the addressee
   b.   They cannot appear with *noda*
   c.   They cannot appear with *-ka*↑
   d.   They are similar phonologically: *janai* without [ai] is *jan*

The observations showing 22b and 22c are shown in 23b and 23c, respectively.

(23)   *Jan* cannot appear with *noda* and *-ka*↑

   a.   *Hanako*   *kuru-↑jan↓*
          Hanako   come-JAN
          'You know, Hanako will come, right?'

   b.   **Hanako*   *kuru-N-↑jan↓*
          Hanako   come-NODA-JANAI-SFP

   c.   **Hanako*   *kuru-jan-ka*↑
          Hanako   come-JAN-KA

In line with Rieser (2017), it seems that *jan* derives from *janai* since it has at least four similarities with *janai*. Then, what is the difference from *janai?*

   In the dialect of Aichi prefecture in Japan, on the other hand, *jan* is used with a sentence-final particle *-ne* as illustrated in 24, but there is no expectation that the addressee knows *Hanako kuru* 'Hanako will come'. In other words, in this dialect, a proposition attached to *jan-ne* is supposed to be new information to the addressee.

(24)   *Hanako*   *kuru-jan-ne*
         Hanako   come-JAN-SFP
         '(By the way,) Hanako will come.'

In addition to *jan* expressions in Tokyo dialect, but also those in other dialects may be analyzed in relation to *janai* sentences.
Janai in Japanese may be related to *janai*-like sentences in other languages as well. For example, in Korean, there are *janai*-like sentences that include the particle *janha*, whose phonological realization is the same as negation, resembling Japanese *nai* 'not' in *janai*. The sentence is shown in 25. The rising-falling intonation at the end of the sentence seems to be similar as well.

(25)   Korean sentence with *janha*
         eoneohag-eun   *eolyeob-janha-↑yo↓*
         linguistics-TOP   difficult-JANHA-POLITE
         'You know, linguistics is difficult, right?'

One native speaker of Korean says that sentence 25 signals that the addressee also thinks that linguistics is difficult. It is not enough to claim something, but maybe the function of *janai* can be related not only to *janai* in Japanese but also to negation-like particles in other languages.

   One thing which remains to be accounted for is how one can represent a compositional denotation of *janai*. Its denotation would make it clearer how *janai* sentences with *noda* become ungrammatical. So far, the ungrammaticality is discussed in a descriptive way, so we can explain in a more formal way by exploring the exact denotation of *janai*.

   Lastly, it is important to do production experiments and perception experiments to see whether the observations in *janai* sentences (it cannot appear with *noda* or rising intonation) are commonly seen in Japanese native speakers. For this paper, my intuition as a native speaker of Tokyo Japanese is used for the observations but checking them with other native speakers is important. In perception experiments, it can be checked that *janai* is incompatible with *noda* and the rising intonation with other native speakers of Tokyo Japanese. By production experiments, what can be checked is the intonations appearing in the *janai* sentences. By conducting the experiments with other native speakers, the analysis would be stronger.

4.2   *Conclusion*   This paper investigates a Tokyo Japanese particle *janai* with rising-falling intonation

in a confirmation sentence. The sentence [proposition]-*janai(-desu-ka)* translates as 'you know, [the proposition] is true, right?', and gives the topic to talk about. In other words, the speaker of *janai* sentences has an expectation that the addressee already knows the proposition as well. A process of elimination to particles other than the proposition suggests that the expectation comes from the *janai* particle.

Also, the paper explores why *noda*, which nominalizes the proposition attached to it (Noda 1997), cannot appear in the same sentence as *janai*. It is argued that *noda* cannot appear in p-*janai* sentences because there is a semantic conflict between *noda* and *janai*. That is, *noda* signals that the proposition cannot be shared, while *janai* signals it must be. This conflict causes the ungrammaticality of *janai* and *noda*. This analysis supports the proposal that *janai* signals the speaker's expectation.

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