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# Analysing Usages of Conversational Japanese Discourse Marker ‘*tte*’: From the Perspective of Hindi Translation

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**Abstract:** The Japanese colloquial discourse markers, ‘*tte*’ has a number of usages in spoken Japanese language. ‘*tte*’ is used to mark a quotation, to denote hearsay (report), to provide emphasis to a sentence, to define a noun, to show condition in a sentence etc. The multiple functions of Japanese discourse marker ‘*tte*’ is unique on one hand but, at the same time creates confusion among the learners of Japanese language on the other hand. Therefore, this paper deals with the problems of this discourse marker wherein its usages and functions have been examined using Hindi translation.

The main objective of this paper is to find out the ways to accurately translate colloquial Japanese discourse marker ‘*tte*’ in Hindi language. The data collected for this study is from a popular Japanese anime “*Kotonoha no Niwa*”, an anime drama released in April, 2013. To conduct the analysis for this study, the dialogues containing ‘*tte*’ has been translated into Hindi language to find out the minuscule differences and appropriate meaning between the several functions.

## Introduction

In Japanese language, *tte* is an abbreviation of written discourse marker *to*, *to iu*. It is mainly used as a colloquial quotative marker. It is often used in contemporary Japanese novels, dramas, movies, mangas and the likes.

The Japanese colloquial discourse markers, *tte* has a number of usages in spoken Japanese language. *tte* is used to mark a quotation, to denote hearsay (report), to provide emphasis to a word or a sentence, to define a noun, to show condition in a sentence etc. (Ikeya 2018, Suzuki R. 2007, Suzuki S. 2006, Iwao 2003 etc.). The multiple functions of Japanese discourse marker *tte* is unique on one hand but, at the same time creates confusion among the learners of Japanese language on the other hand. Therefore, this paper deals with the problems of this discourse marker wherein its usages and functions have been examined using Hindi translation. Hindi Language does not have an expression or discourse marker whose function and usages resembles exactly to that of *tte* and hence it becomes difficult for foreign students to enjoy Japanese contemporary manga, Novels, films, Anime etc.

The main objective of this paper is to find out the ways to accurately translate colloquial Japanese discourse marker *tte* in Hindi language so that the essence and nuances which it represents do not get lost. At the same time, this paper is an attempt to study Japanese discourse marker *tte* from the perspective of Hindi Translation.

The data collected for this study is from a popular Japanese anime “*Kotonoha no Niwa*”. This anime drama film was released in April, 2013 and was directed by Makoto Shinkai. To conduct this study, it is necessary to pick a source which contains dialogues where *tte* has been used frequently. The anime contains

conversations wherein the anime characters have used *tte* at multiple places in varying contexts.

To conduct the analysis for this study, the dialogues containing *tte* has been collected and studied carefully to distinguish between the usages of *tte* and then these dialogues have been translated into Hindi language to find out the minuscule differences and appropriate meaning between the several functions. The source and the translated data will be analysed using qualitative method of data analysis.

### Various usages of *tte*

Before going to the analysis of data of translated dialogues, lets us first see its various functions with the help of simple Japanese sentences.

#### I. Quotative *tte*

1. chichi wa ashita kuru tte itte imasu yo.  
pitAjI kal AeMge ki kahA.  
'pitAjI ne kahA ki vo kal AeMge'
2. Imōto wa kyō jugyō ga taihen da tte.  
choTI bahan Aj kalAs duSkar thI ki  
'choTI bahan kah rahI thI ki Aj ki kalAsA thI.'

In the given sentences, *tte* has been used as quotative marker. This function is considered to be the oldest function of *tte* in that *tte* is used to introduce an utterance (or thought) previously used made by someone else (Suzuki R. 1999). This is often used in colloquial Japanese with thought predicate (思考述語); omou (思う) and utterance predicate (発話述語); iu (いう). And the clause formed with *tte* forms the object complement of the following verb (Okamoto and Oka 2008: 211). In Hindi, the particle which acts as quotation markers is *ki* which also acts as the complement clause introducer. This usually occur with verbs of communication such as say, state, tell etc., verb of perception that is perception such as see, hear etc, verb of thinking and believing such as think, consider etc., and volitional verb such as want, want etc. (Zanon 2011:19). However, the use of *ki* is not compulsorily in Hindi reported sentences, the article can be replaced by comma in written and with a pause in spoken sentences. This feature is different than Japanese language. Also, while speaking, the listener understands the quotation with the help of the context.

#### II. *tte* of hearsay

3. Ano hito wa senseina n da tte.  
vo vyakti zikSak haiM ki  
'(aisA) sunA hai ki vo vyakti zikSak haiM.'
4. Tanaka-san, o sake kiraina n da tte.  
tAnAkA jI zarAb pasaMd nahIM hai ki  
'(aisA) sunne me AyA hai ki tAnAkA jI ko zarAb pasaMd nahIM hai.'

In the given sentence, we see that here quotative *tte* has been coupled with *noda* or *nda* to play the function of hearsay. Hearsay is used to transfer third person information. It is well known that Hindi does not have grammatically marked hearsay rather than it is expressed through indicative moods (Sigorskiy 2010).

Hearsay in Hindi can be expressed with verbs such as *sunanA*, *laganA*, *maIUm honA*, *jAn par3hanA* etc. followed by complementizer *ki*. In the example 3 and 4, the verb *sunanA* has been used with optional marker *aisA* in the beginning. It is also possible to skip *aisA* in the predicates with verbs like *sunA hai*, *lagnA*, *maIUm honA* etc. (Kachru 2006: 216). Now, in Japanese, to denote hearsay expressions such as *to kiita*, *tte kiita*, *to iu koto*, *tte iu kotoda* are employed for confirmed information and for unconfirmed information expressions such as *rashī*, *mitaida*, *sōda* etc are used. In colloquial Japanese, hearsay often takes the form *nda* + *tte* in most of the cases.

### III. Topic marker *tte*

5. kitanai            tte        iu        na yo.  
gaMdA            Φ        bolo     mat.  
‘gaMdA mat bolo.’
6. kare                tte        hige                    no        aru        hito?  
vo vyakti        Φ        dAr3hI jiskI        hai        vyakti  
‘vo vyakti jiskI dAr3hI hai?’
7. a. kaigai            de        shigoto o            suru    tte,        boku    ni totte  
      videz meM    kAm                    karnA (to)    mere    lie  
b. muri                                    da yo.  
      nAmumkin                            hai  
‘videz meM kAm karnA (to) mere lie nAmumkin hai.’

In the given sentences, we see the usage of *tte* is corresponding to the Japanese topic particle *wa*, *to wa*, *to iu no wa*. It is also clear from the above examples that this *tte* can accompany a noun, pronoun, verb, adjective etc. Here *tte* can be replaced with the said particles, However, at some places *tte* is only natural option to use rather than to use *wa*, *to wa*, *to iu no wa*. This is because when the speaker suddenly starts a new conversation with a new topic and the particle is playing the roles of topic marker and quotation marker at the same time, using *tte* appears natural. For example:

8. nē, ano hito, watashi no otōto ni nite nai.  
      otōto tte, ichiban toshishita no.
9. nē, Yamada-san tte omoshiroi hitoda ne.

Hindi usually does not use any kind of particle to denote a subject or a topic, however, sometimes when the speaker need to put emphasise to a topic, Hindi uses thematic particle *to*. The Hindi *to* is context dependent and not necessary equivalent to Japanese counterpart (Kachru 2006: 245). Unlike Japanese, Hindi does not always use a certain particle for marking a theme, rather it is marked by its position in the sentence which is usually sentence-initial position (Kachru 2006: 245).

### IV. *tte* of emphasis

10. a. maiasa,            shizukana            tenki                    ni        sanpo o suru        no  
      har subah        zAMt                    mausam                meM    TahlanA  
b. wa    totemo    kimochi                da        tte.  
      bahut                    AnaMdmay        hai        hI  
‘har subah, zAMt mausam meM TahlanA bahut hI AnaMdmay hotA hai nA’
11. a. Asan: dōkyūsei    no                    mina wa sukī        ni iku                yōyaku o

klAs ke sAre log skliMg jAne kI yojnA  
 b. tateru. anata mo iku?  
 banA rahe hai tum bhI caloge  
 Bsan: Ikanai tte, nankai mo ittadeshou.  
 jAUMgA hI kitnI to cukA hUM

‘klAs ke sAre log skliMg jAne kI yojnA banA rahe hai. tum bhI caloge?  
 jAUMgA hI nahIM. kitnI bAr to kah cukA hUM.’

In the given example *tte* is used to quote one’s own utterance. This also shows speakers impression regarding some event or experience. This usage of *tte* is generally referred as self-quotation marker *tte*. Also, there are cases where *tte* accompanies utterance end particle *yo*, *sa*, *sa* and forms constructions such as *tte yo*, *tte sa*, *tte ba* express different emotion and mood.

In the second example which is a conversation, *tte* has been used to strongly deny the speaker’s request. Therefore, adding *tte* to the end of a negative utterance, the level of negation becomes stronger.

In Hindi, as is known, *to* is a multipurpose marker as the Japanese *tte* and hence the previously used thematic marker *to* can also be used as an emphasis marker in somehow similar fashion as *tte*. For instance,

12. tumhen kya hua hai, batao to sahee.

13. dō shita no, watashi ni sukoshidemo hanashite goran tte (ba).

Other frequently used emphasis marker is *hI* as can be seen in example 10 and 11. For negation in Hindi, the rules for strong negation are different than Japanese. It generally uses discourse marker *hI* and expressions such as *kAfI*, *kisI bhI qImat par*, *kisI hAl meM bh*, *kisI bhI tarah* are used for marking emphasis in a negative utterance.

V. *tte* of repetition.

14. A-san: Kimura-san, kinō issho ni ita otoko tte dare?  
 kImurA jI kal sAth thA lar3kA vo kaun  
 ‘kImurA jI, Apke sAth kal jo lar3kA thA, vo kaun thA?’

B-san: Dare tte, musuko-san datta yo.  
kyA kaun merA beTA thA

‘kyA kaun, merA beTA thA/ merA beTA thA aur kaun thA.’

15. A-san: Ano ryokō no kotona ndakedo, itsu de ī desu ka.  
 ghUmne jAnA thA nA kab sahl rahegA  
 ‘ghUmne jAnA thA nA, kab sahl rahegA.’

a. B-san: Itsu tte, kimatte iru yo. Raishū no shūmatsu ni  
kyA kab tay to hai hI agle haphte par

b. shiyou. Heijitsu wa hima janaikara sa.  
 jAnA hai vIkDe phursat nahIM hotI hai nA isalie

‘kyA kab, tay to hai hI. agle haphte ke vIkMD par jAnA hai. vIkDe ko phursat nahIM hotI hai nA isalie.’

In the given example, we see that the listener responds by repeating the question of the speaker and at the same time quoting the question with *tte*. This is used when the speaker assumes that the listener must be knowing about the information said.

In Hindi, one of the function of the polar question word *kyA* is to mark surprise. The speaker uses *kyA* with another wh-word with rising intonation when s/he assumes that the listener must be aware of the information. This construction in Hindi is mostly represented as *kyA + kyA*, *kyA + kab*, *kyA + kAun*, *kyA kyUn* etc. as can be seen in example 14 and 15. The example 13 can be also be rephrased as *merA betA thA aur kaun thA*.

VI. ‘tte’ of N 1 って N 2 form.

16. A-san: Kinō, pātī ni atta hito dare datta kke?  
kal pArT milA thA vyakti kaun thA.

‘kal pArTI me jo vyakti milA thA vo kaun thA.’

B-san: Nan te hito?

Kaun Φ yakti

‘kaun vyakti?’

17. Gāribbu tte shijin, shitte iru?

g2Alib nAm ke/nAmak zAyar jAnte ho

‘g2Alib nAm ke zAyar ko jAnte ho? g2Alib nAmak zAyar ko jAnte ho?’

In the given example, the use of *tte* is abbreviated form of written expression N1 *to* N2. As we can see from the example that *tte* has been changed to *nante* when used with *nani* and while translating this form, there is no particle required as example 16.

In Hindi, this is expressed through various expression. Hindi expressions such as N + *kahe jAne vAlA/vAle/vAlI* + N2, N1+ *bolA/boll/bole jAne vAlA/vAlI/vAle* + N2, N 1 + *nAm kA/ki/ke* + N2 corresponds with Japanese expression N1 *to* N2. Other expression commonly used in Hindi is *namak* for *to* *iu/tte* *iu* as in example 16 (Kago 2006).

### Relevant examples from the Anime

In this section, we will be referring to some of the dialogues of the said anime movie where *tte* has been used in varying contexts. The example will appear as per the sequence of the movie progressing.

Example 1:

- a. Aniki: Ofukuro wa?  
mAM kahAM hai
- b. akao: Iede  
call gal
- c. Aniki: Rakki korokke yamawakeda na  
Achha hai, korokke ab sirf hum dono khayenge.
- d. Takao: Sagasanaide kudasai tte tegami ni attakedo’  
mat talAznA ki ciTTh\_I likh gayI hai
- e. Takao: Hontōni ī no ka na?  
lekin sac meM kyA
- f. Aniki: Hottoke yo, dōse kareshi to  
tum parezAn mat ho vaise bhI apne baOyaphreMD
- g. kenka shite kaette kurudaro.  
jhagar3kar vApas AjAyegI

‘mAM kahAM hai. call gaI. acch\_A hai, korokke ab ham donoM hI kayeMge.tum parezAn mat ho, vo vaise bhI apne baOyaphreMD se jhagar3kar vApas AjAyegI. ciTTh\_I chor3 gayI hai ki mujhe mat talAznA. lekin sac meM kyA?’

In the above sentence, we see that ‘tte’ has been used to quote or refer to the words of his mother which she has mentioned in the letter and hence Hindi quotation marker (complimentizer) particle *ki* is used in the translation.

Example 2:

- a. Takao: Hareta asa wa chanto chikatetsu ni norikaete koko ni  
gair bAriz kI subah meTro lekar yahAM
- b. kuru. Demo kon'na koto o shite iru  
A jAtA hUM lekiMn ye ye
- c. baai janai tte omou.  
ThIk nAhIM ye bhI man meM AtA hai

‘gair bAriz kI subah meTro lekar yahAM A jAtA hUM. lekiMn ye mere lie ThIk nAhIM hai ye bhI man meM AtA hai.’

In the above the above Japanese sentence *tte* has been as ‘thought predicate’ 思考 述語 and hence in Hindi, the utterance end quotation particle *aisA* should be used with *soctA hUM* but if we carefully look the sentence, we notice that the sentence is not a mere utterance but a monologue so the *tte* here has a nuance of ‘self-quotation’ as well as a thought predicate and hence simply adding *aisA soctA hUM* will not do justice to the translation therefore the emphasis particle *bhI* has been used to complete the nuance.

Example 3:

- a. Takao: Ne, asa kara kōen de bīru o non deru.  
Subah se pArk meM sAke piye jA rahIM haiM
- b. Sake dake tte anmari karada ni yokunaidesu yo.  
sAke sirph to sehat ke lie ThIk nahI hai
- c. Nani ka tabenaito.  
kuch to sAth meM Ijjiye  
‘Ap subah se hI pArk meM sAke piye jA rahIM haiM. sirph sAke to pInA sehat ke lie ThIk nahI hai. kuch to sAth meM Ijjiye.’
- A. Sake dake tte anmari karada ni yokunaidesu yo.  
‘sirph sAke to\* pInA sehat ke lie ThIk nahI hai.’
- A’. Sake dake tte anmari karada ni yokunaidesu yo.  
sirf aur sirf saake peena to\* sehat ke lie theek nahee hai.
- A’’. Sake dake tte anmari karada ni yokunaidesu yo.  
sirf aur sirf saake peena  $\Phi^*$  sehat ke lie theek nahee hai.

In the above dialogue, *tte* has been used as a topic marker corresponding the usages of *wa*, *to wa*, *to iu no wa* with *daake*. As we clearly see that adding Hindi topic marker article *to* is making the translation sound unnatural. However, adding

another *sirph* is able to provide the nuance that *tte* is representing here i.e., to give emphasis to *daake*.

This suggests that topic marker in Hindi is completely different from the Japanese counterpart *tte* in its function and usages. I will be doing a detailed study about this in my further research.

Example 4:

- a. Yukino no motokare: Yokatta na, sono obāchan ni aete sa  
khusI hai us bUDhI aurat se mill
- b. Dare tte (A) hora kōen no sono bentō o motte  
kaun jō pArk meiM (tumase) wo laMc
- c. kureru tte iu hito (A ') Otagai ī kibarashii daro?  
wo aurat tum donoM acch\_A bantA hai na
- d. Ā yokkuri yasumeyo  
ArAm kar lo

‘(mujhe) khusI hai kI tum us bUDhI aurat se mill, are vahI aurat jō pArk meM tumse laMc zeyar kartI hai. tum donoM kA acch\_A bantA hai na. calo ab ArAm kar lo.’

In the above dialogue, *tte* has again been used as topic marker. However, the speaker is referring to a person which listener already know but the speaker is conforming the information here. Hence, this *tte* has got two functions i.e., of a topic marker and at the same time quotation marker. *tte* in this sentence has been used after the topic of the sentence i.e., at the position where usually *wa* is used and hence it is marking a topic. However, since this *tte* is also acting as quotation marker, the use of *wa* here will be unnatural. In translation part *vahI* and *jo* has been used to derive the proper nuance.

Example 5:

The under mentioned dialogues have been taken form the climax scene of the anime. The protagonist is angry at the lady expressing his thoughts with heightened emotions. He expresses his emotions using strong language and emphatic expressions.

- a. Dōshite anta sō iwanakattandesu ka?  
kyoM tumane ye nheen kaha
- b. kodomo no iu koto da tte (A), tekitō ni tsukiaeba  
baccA hai hI man bahlAne ke lie
- c. ī tte (B) omotteta. Ore ga nanika ni, dareka ni  
ThIk yahI socI hogI na maim koI cIz2 kisi ko
- d. Akogareta tte (C), son'na no todoki kkonai,  
cAh IUM agrace kitnA bhI use hanzII karnA
- e. Kanau wake nai tte (D) anta wa saisho  
pUrA karnA nahIM pAUMgA ye (baat) tumhe zurU
- f. kara wakatteta nda. Dattara chanto itte kure yo,  
se patA thI aisA thA to kah detI
- g. Ore no koto kirai da tte (E).  
merA pasaMd nahI bilkul



‘phir tumne ye kahA kyoM nahIM mujhse? abhI baccA hai baccoM sI hI bAteM kartA hai, man bahlAne ke lie ThIk hai yahI socI hogI na. maiM kabhI bhI koI cIz2 ko agrace kitnA bhI cAh IUM maiM use kabhI pUrA nahIM kar pAUMgA ...ye bAt tumhe zurU se hI patA thI na. aisA thA to kah detI ki mai fAltU hUM...ki tum skUI kyUM nahIM jAte ...ki merA yahAM AnA bilkul pasaMd nahI.’

In the example here, we can see the protagonist is trying to put stress on his utterance by putting *tte* at the end of every utterance. Here, *tte* has been mostly used as emphasis marker as in A, B, C and E and theme marker as in D. While in case of (B), *tte* has also been used as general quotation marker besides emphasis marker.

In the translation part, it is very difficult to bring out the same nuance since Hindi does not have one certain expression which can be used as emphasis marker and at the same time also as quotation marker. Therefore, I have used various other words or expressions of Hindi Language to do justice to the translation. However, at the same I feel that the translation needs more improvement here which will come only after extensive understanding of emphatic constructions in both the languages.

### Conclusion

This study found out that the expressions such as *tte* has been used frequently in the novel, however, the frequency of certain usages are more than the other.

The study also concluded that translating Japanese discourse markers especially *tte* in Hindi language is difficult and requires a deep understanding of the said discourse marker regarding its various usages. After translating the dialogues in Hindi language, we found that Hindi language does not have exact expression or discourse which corresponds to *tte* and which can be used in Hindi language the ways *tte* is used to represent various functions. However, there were specific Hindi expressions which can be used to show the respective functions of *tte*. This is probably because colloquial Hindi differs with colloquial Japanese in a way that Japanese language has colloquial forms of even discourse markers and expression besides having colloquial form of other parts of speech. On the other hand, Hindi language has very limited colloquial forms where a word or expression has both written and colloquial equivalents. Hindi language mostly has colloquial form for Nouns, pronouns and verbs among others. However, this is also true that in Japanese language the written and colloquial equivalents of a certain word is not always interchangeable. For example, the expressions such as *wa*, *to wa*, *toi no wa* are considered as formal form of *tte* but as we have seen in the above examples there are cases when *tte* cannot be replaced with *wa*, *to wa*, *toi no wa*.

Translating the dialogues of anime and at the same time looking for words and expressions in Hindi language to derive the appropriate nuances was an interesting thing to do and provided me an opportunity to learn many about this subject. At the same time, I felt an extensive study of *tte* and similar discourse markers are necessary to give justice to this research and translation. Therefore, I would like to expand this research in the future by incorporating other similar discourse markers and by expanding the scope of study.

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