Exploration of soliloquy in Japanese
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1. Introduction
Soliloquy is to utter one’s thoughts without addressing anyone. This paper advocates investigation of soliloquy as a new approach in pragmatics research.

Language has been recognized as an instrument of communication and thought. The research exploring language as an instrument of communication is enormous, and our understanding of various linguistic devices for effective communication has advanced significantly in recent decades. By contrast, exploration of language as an instrument of thought is scarce, with the study of private speech in psycholinguistics a notable exception.

Studies of soliloquy provide valuable data in examination of how linguistic structures differ between communicative and non-communicative settings. Japanese is especially appropriate for this kind of investigation, because native speakers of Japanese appear to have a categorical awareness of soliloquy. Speakers of English, by contrast, normally do not have the same clear distinction. For example, when asked whether a phrase such as ‘I see’ is in dialog or soliloquy, their answers vary considerably.

This difference is likely due to the fact that the soliloquy mode of discourse has been grammaticized in Japanese, but it is not grammaticized in English. Consequently, soliloquy plays a more significant role in Japanese, although it has pragmatic significance in both languages.

Some researchers consider that speech and thought are always dialogic. That is, the speaking-self and the talked-to-self exist in soliloquy, and they mirror normal conversational exchanges. Even if this is the case, however, there should be profound differences between the dialogic and soliloquial modes of discourse. We can easily speculate, for example, that linguistic politeness is absent in soliloquy because no addressee and, in turn, no face-threatening acts are involved. For another example, the information structure of soliloquy inevitably differs from normal, dialogic conversations because the speaker does not have to consider an addressee’s knowledge and perspective.

In order to investigate how communicative and non-communicative intentions influence utterance structures, an experiment was conducted in which soliloquies of native speakers of Japanese were examined. This paper reports a preliminary analysis of these soliloquy data and discusses the findings in order to suggest further directions for research on this topic.

2. Private Speech
The study of soliloquy was originated by Piaget, who observed kindergarten children talking to themselves. He named this phenomenon egocentric speech, arguing that egocentric speech was due to young children’s cognitive immaturity. That is, while communicating with others, they are unable to take the listener’s perspective into consideration, so their utterances are incomprehensible to others. Children frequently use, for example, deixis and pronouns without
clear referents. Piaget contends that egocentric speech disappears as the child’s cognitive maturity and social experiences grow.

Vygotsky, on the other hand, interpreted the same phenomenon in a totally different manner. For him, the developmental direction is not from egocentric utterances to social, communicative utterances, as Piaget had claimed, but rather, from social speech to subvocalized inner speech, i.e. to thoughts. In other words, Vygotsky contends, young children often think aloud because they have not yet learned to control their thoughts internally. Today, Vygotsky’s perspective is commonly referred to as private speech. In Vygotsky’s theory, private speech is the link between early socially communicative speech and mature inner speech. He hypothesized that during the early school years, the development of inner speech stabilizes, and as a consequence, private speech disappears. Vygotsky contended that private speech serves as self-guidance and self-direction. Therefore, the frequency of soliloquy should increase significantly, when an obstacle is introduced into children’s activities.

Regarding the formal properties of private speech, Vygotsky assumed that as private speech develops into internal thought, it becomes more abbreviated and cryptic. He speculated that syntactic constituents are more thoroughly expressed in social speech, but inner speech consists solely of predicates because the topic of an utterance (which is typically encoded as the grammatical subject) is already known to the speaker. Private speech initially is similar to social speech, but it is gradually restructured toward the syntax of inner speech. Although this is a commonsensical hypothesis, it has not been verified by experimental studies. Feigenbaum, for example, reports that between ages 4 and 8, private speech tends to be more fragmented than social speech, but it does not become increasingly fragmented. Rather, his data show that private speech becomes longer and more complex with increased age.

Gradually, private speech becomes less noticeable. However, this fact does not guarantee that children stop producing it. In our society, private speech is so stigmatized that we may become embarrassed, if caught while soliloquizing. Private speech by elderly persons is frequently regarded as an awkward form of self defense against stress, or as a sign of withdrawal from the social world. Most children come to realize this social inhibition and gradually relinquish private speech in the presence of others. Nevertheless, private speech does continue throughout an individual’s lifetime.

3. Experiment
In order to understand the nature of soliloquy in Japanese, an experiment was conducted. 19 subjects (6 males and 13 females, all native speakers of Japanese) spoke out his/her thoughts for 10-15 minutes, while alone in an isolated room. They were instructed not to speak to an imaginary person, but rather, to verbalize forthrightly whatever came to their consciousness. Their soliloquies were recorded and subsequently transcribed. A total of 2,377 utterances and utterance fragments were obtained. A preliminary analysis has revealed several interesting characteristics of soliloquy in Japanese. From those, two will be discussed today. First, the female speech style, which is common in casual conversation, occurs rarely in soliloquy. Second, the sentence-final particle *ne*, which is considered one of the most salient communicative markers in Japanese, frequently occurs also in soliloquy.
3.1. Gendered Speech Styles

Of the 2,377 utterances obtained in this experiment, 1,636 were uttered by the 13 female speakers, and 741 were uttered by the 6 male speakers. Out of the 1,636 female utterances, only 59 (or 4%) involved so-called female language. These female style tokens are summarized here.

(The numbers in square brackets indicate frequencies of occurrences.)

Female Style Expressions

a. わたし/あたし (female 1st person pronoun in casual speech) [20]

b. the beautifier prefix o + NP         [14]
   何て言うお花なんだろう。
   ‘I wonder what this flower is called.’

c. NP + the sentence-final particle ね／よね [10]
   何だかみんな同じ様なかっこね。
   ‘Somehow they all look the same.’

d. the sentence-final particle かしら [9]
   今週は暑くなるのかしら。
   ‘I wonder if it’s going to be hot this week.’

e. the sentence-final particle わ [3]
   あ、これだわ。
   ‘Oh, this is it.’

f. そうね (as used as an interjection) [2]
   後は、そうね、あのへんの整理しようかな。
   ‘And then, well, I may want to clean there.’

g. a sentence ended with こと ‘thing’ [1]
   こないだ貰った菊の花、まあ、よくもったこと。
   ‘How long they lasted, the chrysanthemums クリサンシマムズ they gave me!’

Male speakers in this experiment used gendered speech slightly more frequently than female speakers. The number of occurrences of male style expressions are 51, or 7% of the total of 741 male utterances.

Male Style Expressions

   俺も書道は嫌いだし。
   ‘I don’t like calligraphy either.’
b. Vowel Coalescence
飛行機の音がうるせえ。（<うるさい）
‘The airplane noise is loud.’

c. the sentence-final particle よな
ちゃんと入ってるよな。
‘I hope it’s been recorded okay.’

d. the sentence-final particle かね
リナックスのいい所は何なのかねえ。
‘I wonder what the advantage of Linux is.’

e. Suppletion
このぐらいでかい机が欲しい。（≈大きい）
‘I want a big desk like this.’

Women’s soliloquies rarely contained female style expressions. In the following examples, the forms in bold face are traditionally labeled as male forms.

あ、あの、ハワイにあったぜんまいもおいしかったねえ。ちょっと、日本の、日本で手に入るぜんまいとちょっと違うんだけど、あのぜんまい、おいしかったねえ。ああ、でも、ハワイで一番おいしかったのは、あああ、ハワイのパパイヤ。それからマンゴ。ねえ、ハワイで取れるマンゴ食べたいなあ。
‘That flowering fern I ate in Hawaii was also very delicious. It’s a little different from flowering fern we can buy in Japan, but it was delicious. But the most delicious food in Hawaii was papayas. And mangos. I want to eat a mango from Hawaii.’

焼き物かあ。小学校ん時にちょっとだけやったくらいかな、林間学校なんかで。何か、最近そういう芸術関係とかにふれてないかもなぁ。あ、でも、美術館行ったな。あれいったっただかな。二週間、三週間前だ。そうだ。みんなが来てた時に行ったんだ。
‘Pottery … I made some only when I was in elementary school, during summer camps. I guess I’m not exposed to art nowadays. Oh, I went to a museum. When was it? Two weeks … it was three weeks ago. That’s right. We went there when they visited us.’

It is odd to say that women normally soliloquize in male speech. Therefore, these forms should not be labeled as gendered forms at all.

3.2. Sentence-Final Particles
Like in conversations, sentence-final particles appear very frequently in soliloquy. Approximately 50% of all utterances in my experiment data ended in a sentence-final particle. This table summarizes the occurrences of such particles.
It has been recognized widely that the particle *na* can occur in soliloquy. Our data confirm this attribute. The total number of occurrences of *kana, na, yona,* and *kena* combined is 589, appearing in 25% of all utterances.

Surprising in these data is the frequent use of *ne*. When combined with *yone* and *kane*, it occurs 375 times, or 16% of all utterances. This frequent occurrences of *ne* was unpredicted because *yo* and *ne* are always characterized in terms of information sharing between the speaker and the addressee. That is, these particles are believed to occur only in the presence of an addressee.

*Yo* is said to be used when the speaker considers that the information is novel to the addressee or the information is known but outside the addressee’s current awareness. By contrast, *ne* is said to be used when the speaker believes that the information is known to the addressee, and the supposed function of *ne* is to require confirmation or to seek or show agreement.

To my knowledge, none of the previous works recognizes that *ne* can occur in the absence of an addressee. Our soliloquy data include abundant tokens of *ne* and suggest that the essential function of *ne* is independent of the alleged shared knowledge with the addressee.

The only hitherto proposed analysis that can be extended to accommodate *ne* in soliloquy is Takubo and Kinsui’s *discourse management model*. They attempt to explain the function of *ne* without recourse to addressee’s knowledge. To this end, they posit a cognitive interface between speech forms and the speaker’s knowledge. This interface consists of two psychological domains: the *direct experience domain* and the *indirect experience domain*. These domains contain indices, or pointers, to the data in the speaker’s permanent memory.

Takubo and Kinsui claim that the act of speaking is to manipulate indices in both domains by means of registering, searching, computing, inferring, etc. They contend that sentence-final particles are directives or monitoring devices in information processing on the part of the speaker. Therefore, they do not rely on assumed knowledge held by the addressee.

When the addressee hears such a device, however, he or she can infer the ongoing progress of the speaker’s internal information processing, and can plan or make an appropriate move. In their analysis, the essential function of *ne* is *matching* of information between two sources. These two sources may be knowledge obtained from two different persons, or different data points within a
single person. This idea of matching, or concordance, seems to apply to most occurrences of *ne* in soliloquy.

*Ne* occurs frequently with such adverbials as *yappa* or *yappari*, which means ‘as expected, or of course’ and *naruhodo*, which means ‘reasonable, or that explains why something is in such a state’. These adverbials indicate that the speaker has compared the current situation with a piece of information in his/her permanent memory. For example,

a. でも、やっぱ、雑誌って日本の雑誌の方がいいねえ。
   ‘But yeah, with magazines, Japanese ones are better.’

b. へえ、成る程ね。
   ‘Oh, that makes sense.’

Takubo and Kinsui’s contention that *ne* is a monitoring device for the speaker, rather than for the addressee seems valid. However, they also consider *yo* to work in a similar way, but our data do not support it. The complete absence of *yo* in soliloquy implies that *yo* is a communicative device, not a self monitoring one. Again, this fact awaits further investigation.

4. Conclusions
This paper has analyzed experimentally-obtained soliloquy data and discussed two issues. First, our data contradict the traditional characterization of gendered speech styles. When such a framework is applied to our data, an incongruous conclusion is inevitable: i.e., women normally soliloquize in the male speech style. Consequently, this paper suggests that those so-called male speech forms should be considered as gender neutral.

Second, both sentence-final particles *yo* and *ne* have traditionally been described only in terms of information sharing or lack thereof between the speaker and the addressee. In our data, however, *yo* is completely absent, whereas *ne* appears frequently. This fact suggests that these two particles should be characterized on different grounds.

The purpose of the present paper is to promote investigation of soliloquy. Needless to say, the primary function of language is to communicate with other people. However, language is also used to ‘communicate’ with one’s self. Soliloquy provides a cornucopia of precious data accessible for a variety of linguistic investigations that deserve attention.