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A Study of case marker “de” in Japanese and Telugu

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the case marker “de” in Japanese and Telugu, which is important in the fields of Japanese and Telugu linguistics and education. This paper is based on a comparative analysis of the case formats of Telugu and Japanese, with the aim of reducing errors and misinterpretations that may arise during the learning process. This study provides insights for native speakers within the Dravidian language family who study Japanese. The paper's structure primarily involves comparing the Japanese case particle “de” with its Telugu equivalents, such as “అందున్/andun/, నందు/Nandun/, లోన్/lon/, తోన్/thon/, తోడన్/todan/.” The comparative analysis will be contextualised within Telugu sentences with an emphasis on exploring binary verbs. This study provides valuable insights into the limited body of research that explores the linguistic complexities of these two languages.

INTRODUCTION

The existing research on the contrastive research conducted between Telugu and Japanese, in the field of education conducted both in India and Japan is exceedingly limited, as indicated by the “National Institute of Informatics Paper Search Navigator (CiNii).”According to the aforementioned sources, there were nine relevant publications.Of these, one study focused on the examination of the Telugu language itself, six pertain to the pronunciation or linguistics of Telugu and English, and two engaged in comparative studies primarily involving Telugu and Japanese.

The subject of this research, the comparative analysis of case markers in Japanese, is of paramount importance in the fields of Japanese linguistics and Japanese language education.Numerous studies have been conducted by Japanese linguists and scholars in this field. However, as previously mentioned, it has been observed that research on Telugu language and Telugu language education within the Japanese education area has been notably limited. Additionally, to date, there have been no comparative linguistic studies on the case particles of Japanese and Telugu.In light of this, the author, a native Telugu speaker, aims to contribute to the study of case markers in Japanese through a comparative analysis of the case formats of Telugu.

The inception of this research was precipitated by the findings of Shinnosuke Ohno, a Japanese linguist who posits a genetic connection between Japanese and Tamil. Impelled by the implications of Ohno’s “Origin of the Japanese Language’ study, the author embarked on this investigation to acknowledge the benefits of Ohno's insights.

Based on personal experience, the author observed that many Telugu native speakers tended to make errors in the usage of particles, particularly with regard to case markers, when initially learning Japanese. This paper aims to difference and similarities between the one of the case markers “de” in Japanese and Telugu, with an objective to reduce errors and misinterpretations that may arise during the learning process.The results of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for individuals who speak Telugu and are in the process of learning Japanese.

Previous Research and Research Methodology

The author discovered several linguistic parallels between their native language, Telugu, and Japanese, while acquiring proficiency in the latter. This research aims to conduct a comparative analysis of the grammatical concept of “case” in Japanese and Telugu, providing insights for native speakers within the Dravidian language family who study Japanese. The primary focus of this study is to examine the similarities and differences between Japanese case particles and Telugu postpositions.To accomplish this goal, the author intends to introduce Telugu, provide an overview of its syntactic structures, and where possible, briefly explain the related linguistic aspects of grammar, excluding case particles. The paper’s overall structure primarily involves comparing the Japanese case particle “de” with its Telugu equivalents, such as “అందున్/andun/, నందు/Nandun/, లోన్/lon/, తోన్/thon/, తోడన్/todan/.”This comparative analysis will be contextualised within Telugu sentences, with an emphasis on exploring binary verbs.

A scholarly corpus that delves into the linguistic traits of Japanese and Telugu is conspicuously scarce.To bridge this knowledge gap, this study provides an intensive examination.Initially, the investigation entailed furnishing a comprehensive explanation of the aforementioned case particle and postposition in both Japanese and Telugu.By establishing this foundational comprehension, this study intends to lay the groundwork for methodical comparative analysis.

The main aim of the comparative analysis is to probe the functionalities and applications associated with the Japanese particle “de” and its equivalent postpositional expressions in Telugu. Through diligent analysis of these linguistic elements, this study seeks to elucidate the intricate ways in which case particles and postpositions operate within the grammatical frameworks of Japanese and Telugu.This analytical endeavour is designed to provide valuable insights into the limited body of research exploring the linguistic complexities of these two languages.

Case in Japanese
According to the Japanese language Dictionary (1980), The term “case” broadly refers to the position that nouns, pronouns, and similar entities assume in relation to other words within a given context. In this sense, across all languages, whenever a noun or word functioning nominally operates within a sentence, the phenomenon of case inevitably accompanies it.

Vibhakti Patyayam in Telugu
The term used to describe the relationship between words in Telugu is referred to as “vibhakti patyayam.”This concept comprises of eight distinct groups.Without Vibhakti Prachayam, understanding a sentence in Telugu is impossible.Additionally, vibhakti patyayam is sometimes referred to as karakamulu. However, it is important to note that there may be instances where a sentence can be conveyed without the use of vibhakti patyayam, such as through the use of యొక్క /yokka/.

- ఇదినాయొక్కఇల్లు /IdhiNaa YOKKA Illu/
  これは私の家である /Kore wa watashi no ie de aru/

In contemporary Telugu, this passage is written as “ఇదినాఇల్లు/Idhi na illu/.”

PeddaBaalaShikasha(pp.211)
In Telugu, postpositions are referred to as “Vibhakti” and are categorised into eight groups based on the relationship between the subject and object.Unlike Indo-European languages such as Japanese and Telugu, the word order follows a subject-object-verb structure.Consequently, both languages rely heavily on case markers (or postpositions in Telugu).Owing to their synthetic nature, Japanese and Telugu exhibit numerous grammatical similarities.

Comparison of the Case Particle “de” in Japanese and Postpositions in Telugu
The Telugu language utilizes two postpositions, “లోన్/lon/” and “అందున్/andun/,” to correspond with the Japanese case particle “de.” However, the context of the sentence may necessitate the substitution of “అందున్/andun/” with “నందున్/nandun/.” The postposition “లోన్/lon/” functions as a locative case, primarily used to indicate a location, but it also exhibits versatility in its usage by denoting a part, means, or extent, much like the Japanese case particle “で.” In Telugu, “నందున్/nandun/” is more commonly utilized in colloquial expressions, whereas “లోన్/lon/” is typically transformed into “లో/lo/.” The usage of these postpositions in Telugu is similar to the widespread employment of the Japanese case particle “de” in Japanese linguistic contexts.

Locative usage of “de”

- スターバックスでカプチーノを飲む
  సుతారుబక్కుసుకాఫీషాప్లోకఫ్ఫీతాగాను
  /Starbucks Coffee shop LO Cappuccino Taaganu/
- インターネットで本を買う
  ఇంటర్నేత్ట్లోపుస్తకమకొన్నాను
  /internet LOpustakamkonnanu/

Instrument usage “de”

- 辞書で単語を調べた。
  నిగంటువునందు /లోపదాలఅర్ధాలువెతికాను
  /NigantuvuNANDU/LOpadaalaardhaluvethikaanu

- 携帯電話で妹と話をした。
  సెల్ఫోనేలోచెల్లెలితోమాట్లాడను
  /Cellphone LOChelleLi THO matlaaDanu/

“de” as Summation

In the study of Japanese linguistics, the particle “de” serves a particular function when expressing quantities, durations, and the overall monetary value. They are commonly used to indicate the comprehensive or collective results of an entity.It is worth noting that the absence of particles in Telugu does not create a sense of dissonance when expressing total monetary value.

- 三人でこれを作った
  ముగ్గురముకలిసిదీనినితయ్యారుచేసాము
  /MugguraMUkalisideenNIthayaaruchesaamu/

- 全部で千円です
  మొత్తముకలిపివెయ్యిరూపాయలుఅయినది
  /MothanMUkalipiveiiyiruupalyaluayinshi/

In Japanese, the particle “de” is used to represent the collective or the sum of the total.Howeverm in case of the Telugu, functions as a NOMINATIVE CASE, endig with, “ము (mu)” It may be deduced that in the process of summarizing, there was a reduction in the use of cases in Telugu, while Japanese utilizes the case particle “de” to convey a comprehensive or all-encompassing meaning.

“de” usage in the context of limitation

The Telugu postposition లో (lo) denotes various contexts, including things, times, and places. It holds nuanced meanings analogous to the Japanese case particle “de”. However, it is important to note that distinctions in nuances depend on the specific context.

- This is the best in the world.
  ఇదిప్రపంచములోకాళ్ళమొదటిది.
  /idhiPrapancham LO kallamottamodatiDhi/

- Do you want to go elsewhere in Japan?
  జపాన్లోఎక్కడికైనావెళ్ళాలనిఅనుకున్తునవ.
  /Japan LO addikainaavellaalaniAnukunnavaa/anukkutunnaraa/

In Japanese, the particles “de” and “no” are used to indicate a specific time or the time required to perform an action. In contrast, Telugu employs words such as “లో” (lo) or “లోపల” (lopala) to express a fixed time range or the amount of time required to finish a task. It should be noted that Telugu includes various dialects, leading to variations in the words used, while maintaining the same usage pattern. Some dialectal words are “లో” (lo), “ల” (la), “లోపల” (lopala), “లోపట్లో” (lopatlo), “లోగ” (loga), and “లోన” (lonn), among others. Regardless of the dialect, these words consistently begin with the sound “ల” (la). This study focuses exclusively on standard language words that are recognised as such.

- You can get there within an hour.
  ఒకగంటలో /లోపలవెల్లతాను.
  /Okagantta LO/LOPALA velluthanu/

- You can do this in a week.
  ఒక్కవారంలో /లోపలతయ్యారుఅమతుందీ.
  /Okkawaramu LO/LOPALA tahaiyaruavuthundi/

The particle “de” in Japanese serves a variety of functions, one of which is to indicate the raw material used. In Telugu, the equivalent terms are “తోడన్” (todan), “తోన్” (ton), and “తో” (to in spoken language). The term “నుండి” (nundi) is also commonly used in modern Telugu, but it does not fall under the category of postpositions in Telugu. The main distinction between the two is that “నుండి” (nundi) is used in the active voice, while “తోడన్” (todan) and “తోన్” (ton) are used in the passive voice. It is important to note that these are just some of the many postpositions in Telugu, and not an exhaustive list. However, నుండి (nundi) is not a postposition but a case marker in Telugu.

- The desk is made of wood.
  బల్లచెక్కతోచేయబడినది
  /Ballachekka THO cheyabadinadhi/

- Wood made of wood.
  చెక్కచెట్టునుండితీయబడినది
  /Chekkachettununditeeyabadinadhi/

Grammatically, sentences a) and b) are indistinguishable and convey the same meanings.In sentence (b), "wood" serves as the raw material for crafting a "desk", and there is a possibility that the raw material may be observable in its final form or after completion. However, in a), the "wood" functioning as the raw material for the desk is distinctly visible. తోడన్ (todan) is a conventional postposition found in ancient Telugu texts and is presently employed exclusively in written language.

"de" to indicate reason
The Telugu postpositions వలన (valana) and వల్ల (valla) share a similar function with the causal marker "de" in Japanese. Both terms can be used for both written and spoken Telugu. Nevertheless, in modern-day Telugu, వల్ల (valla) is more commonly utilized in informal settings than వలన (valana).

- Missed school due to a cold.
  జలుబువల్ల/వలనబడిమానేశాను.
  /Jalubu VALLA/VALANA badiiMaaneshannu/

- Inadvertent falling down stairs.
  అశ్రద్ధవల్లమెట్లమీదనుండిపడిపొయాను.
  /AshradDha VALLA metlameedhanundiPadipooyan/

"de"to indicate Mode
"In Japanese, the particle 'de' is used to indicate the mode, and it has counterparts in Telugu, which are expressed through three distinct postpositions: 'meeda,' 'lo,' and 'pain.' These postpositions are chosen based on the specific means employed."

- Cycle to school.
  సైకిలుపైనబడికివెళ్తాను.
  /Cycle PAINA badikivellanu/

- Commuting by train.
  రైలులోప్రయాణంచేస్తాను.
  /Railu LO prayanamCheesthanu/

- We drove to the cinema.
  కారులోసినిమాకివెళ్ళాను.
  /Caaru LO cinema ki Vellaanu/

- I go to the company every day using bike
  బైకుమీదరొజూఉద్యోగానికివెళ్తాను.
  /Baiku MEEDHA RojuuDyoganikivelthanu/

Upon conducting this research, it is clear that the postpositions corresponding to the Japanese case particle "de" in Telugu include అందున్ (andun), నందు (nandun), లోన్ (lon), తోన్ (thon), and తోడన్ (todan). These postpositions played similar roles.In particular, లోన్ (lon) and లో (lo) closely resemble the Japanese case particle "de", exhibiting versatility in indicating "place", "tool", "means", and "range", much like their Japanese counterpart.

CONCLUSION

In summary, this article has compared the linguistic features of Japanese and Telugu, focusing on the arrangement of words, the employment of postpositions, and the use of case particles.Word order in both languages is malleable and depends on the verb, which indicates the subject, object, and action.Despite the variations in word order, the appropriate use of particles ensures effective communication without being considered a mistake. A distinction between Japanese and Telugu lies in the postpositions utilised, with Telugu having eight types in total, with six being commonly used in contemporary languages.Of these, two are archaic and have a limited usage. While some postpositions in Telugu have fixed usage, others, such as లోన్ (lon) and లో (lo), exhibit flexibility and are reminiscent of the Japanese case particle "de".