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Tiffany Vu April 14, 2015

The Syntactic Constraints of the Japanese Particle *Ne*

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Abstract

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Second language learners of Japanese are taught that the Japanese particle *ne* is placed at the end of sentences to ask for confirmation or agreement from the listener. But after hearing Japanese colloquial speech, *ne* seems to be spoken sentence-internally as well. There is not much previous research that has looked at where *ne* can appear sentence-internally. With this thesis, I have investigated the question of whether or not *ne* has any syntactic constraints sentence-internally and have compared the results with the judgments of three scholars. I performed a corpus study and found that even though *ne* appeared primarily sentence-finally, a portion of the corpus still showed that *ne* appeared sentence-internally as well. Accompanying the corpus study was a survey of grammaticality judgments distributed to native Japanese speakers that asked them to perform two tasks. The first task asked respondents to perform grammaticality judgments on sentences with *ne* placed in different positions in a sentence. The second task provided participants with two sentences that did not include *ne* and asked the respondents to place *ne* in two or more places in the sentence. The results from the first task showed that speakers preferred to place *ne* after the topic, conjunct, and locative phrases of the sentence. The results from the second task showed that speakers preferred to place *ne* after the topic of the sentence as well as after the first clause of the sentence. Instead of describing *ne* as ungrammatical or grammatical in certain positions of a sentence, it seems to be more accurate describing *ne* favoring positions that are more separate from the rest of a sentence over positions that are more embedded in a sentence of a sentence. These results help to show the complications of *ne*'s usage that makes it difficult for second language learners to learn how to use it in colloquial speech, and so demonstrates the need for further understanding of *ne*'s use sentence-internally.

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1. Introduction

In Japanese, the particle *ne* is frequently used at the end of a sentence to ask for confirmation from the listener (Hasegawa 2010). For example:

(1.) a.) Kyou-no tenki-wa warui-desu.
Today-Possession weather-Subj. bad-is.
Today's weather is bad.
b.) Kyou-no tenki-wa warui-desu-*ne*.
Today-Possession weather-Subj. bad-is-*ne*
Today's weather is bad right?

In (1.) a.), the sentence is stated as a fact, in comparison with (1.) b.) in which the speaker is asking the listener for confirmation. As a second language learner of Japanese, I also learned to use *ne* at the end of sentences to seek confirmation as is stated in my textbook,

> "Statements often end with the tags *ne* or *yo*, depending on the way the speaker views the interaction with the listener. If the speaker is seeking the listener's confirmation or agreement to what has been said, then *ne* ("right?") could be added." (66) – *Genki I: An Integrated Course in Elementary Japanese*.

Scholars have also typically identified *ne* as a "sentence-final particle," again highlighting its tendency to appear at the end of a sentence, or as *Genki I* states, at the end of statements.

Nevertheless, *ne* can also be used sentence-internally. After studying abroad and watching numerous Japanese television shows, I would occasionally hear *ne* being used not only at the end of sentences but in other places in a sentence as well. For example,

(2.) Watashi-wa-*ne* sensei-kara moratta hon-wo yonda.
I-Subj.-*ne* teacher-from received book-Obj. read
I read the book I received from my teacher.

Ne comes after the subject of the main clause of the sentence, *watashi-wa* (I), instead of at the end of the utterance as *Genki I* indicates.

On the other hand, *ne* cannot just appear anywhere in a sentence. For example,

(3.) *Watashi-*ne*-wa sensei-kara moratta hon-wo yonda.
I-*ne*-Subj. teacher-from received book-Obj. read

Ne cannot intervene between a word and its following particle. As we can see from (2.) and (3.), usage of *ne* is more complicated than to say that it is used at the end of a sentence.

Because of such complications, it is important to identify any patterns where *ne* can or cannot appear in a sentence to aid second language learners in learning how to properly use *ne.* The goal of this thesis is to see if there are any syntactic constraints that could clarify exactly where *ne* can appear in a sentence. This will be done through a corpus study of transcriptions that include the speech of native Japanese speakers, as well as analysis of a survey that was given to Japanese speakers to judge the grammaticality of *ne* when placed in certain positions in a sentence. Understanding if there are any constraints to *ne*'s placement sentence-internally would help second language learners, such as myself, better understand its use in colloquial Japanese speech so that we may also become more fluent.

2. Previous Work on *ne*

2.1 Semantics of *Ne*

Due to the different places where *ne* can appear sentence-internally, it is likely that there are differing semantics of *ne*. As noted previously, the use of *ne* as a particle that seeks the listener's confirmation or agreement is one of *ne*'s primary uses, but this turns out to be only one of several suggested semantic purposes of *ne* by several scholars. Lee (2007) provides an alternative hypothesis stating that "*Ne* is characterized as the 'incorporative' marker. It signals

the speaker's attitude of inviting the partner's involvement through which he/she is committed to align with the partner with respect to the content and feeling conveyed in the utterance" (364). Instead of suggesting that the speaker is trying to seek agreement or confirmation, Lee suggests that the speaker is actually trying to keep the listener involved in the conversation. He uses the following example in which *ne* is being used in places other than at the end of a sentence:

(4.) Ano aru teido, maa jibun-no-peisude-*ne*, sorede-*ne* hito-ni-*ne*,
well to.some.degree well in.my.own.pace-*ne*, and.so-*ne* people-to-*ne*
anoo nanka iroppoku iru jinsei-ni naritai . . .
well well sexy be life want.to.become
'Well, ((I like to live)) at my own pace, and so like to be a person whose life is seen as somewhat sexy.' [Doku]

He uses this example to show that the speaker is trying to involve the listener in the conversation. Although it may not be obvious from the English translation, to a native Japanese speaker, *ne* seems to be ensuring that the listener is paying attention and is involved in the conversation. This alternative hypothesis for *ne*'s semantics could also be applied to it being used sentence-finally.

Hiroko Tanaka (2000) also addresses *ne* as a "turn-taking device" which points to its purpose of involving people in a conversation. *Ne* as a "turn-taking device" means that *ne* is used to show when the speaker's turn is coming to an end so that the listener may speak next. But *ne* is said to have many functions and not simply to show the speaker's turn is coming to an end. Tanaka states that *ne* has four positions where it can arise: "turn-initial, turn-internal, turn-final, and an entire turn" (1135). Turn-initial means that *ne* appears as the first word spoken with the implication that the speaker is beginning their turn to speak (1141). For example,

(5.) *Ne*-, kore-nannano?
Hey, this-what?
Hey, what's this?
13-1 F07-F08[1]

Ne can also take an entire turn in which it is the only word uttered by the speaker to show that they will begin speaking as well as transition to a different but relevant topic (Tanaka 1141). In regards to *ne* in turn-internal position, Tanaka says that "the particle *ne* is used to check recipient attention and to solicit confirmation of continued attention during the course of a turn" (1154). According to Tanaka, *ne* has the functions of seeking confirmation and checking for the involvement of the listener.

Tanaka (2000) mentions that *ne* can occur "turn-internally," but he does not address where in a sentence *ne* can occur. He does state that "final particles are massively attached postpositionally at the end of a syntactic or lexical unit," which means that they are often attached to the end of a word or phrase. But this still does not necessarily clarify if there are any specific places where *ne* can be placed as opposed to other places in a sentence (1140). Tanaka does not offer further discussion of this topic.

Now that I have discussed a few other meanings of *ne* other than its semantic use as a sentence-final particle, I will discuss previous research on syntactic constraints regarding where *ne* can be used in a sentence, which is the main focus of my thesis.

[1] From the Basic Transcription System for Japanese Corpus; "13-1" refers to file name, and "F" refers to female.

2.2 Syntax of *Ne*

There has not been much work that has focused on *ne* appearing sentence-internally, and the linguists whose hypotheses I will introduce, do not focus on *ne's* syntactic constraints. Their claims about its syntactic constraints are from their own judgments, and they were actually focusing on different topics related to Japanese syntax. Perhaps for this reason there seems to be some disagreement in terms of its placement.

2.2.1 Endo (2007)

Endo (2007) briefly mentions the syntactic constraints on *ne* as a footnote. He states that *ne* can be "suffixed to any XP," which essentially means *ne* can follow any constituent or phrase in a sentence.[2] We can look at the following example to see how this would look.

(6.) Sono jugyou-wo-*ne* yasunda-*ne* gakusei-ga-*ne* sukida-*ne*.
That class-Obj.-*ne* rested-*ne* student-Obj.-*ne* like-*ne*
I like the student who skipped that class.

Ne appears after each noun phrase and after each attached case marker in (6.), which follows Endo's hypothesis. According to his hypothesis, *ne* would not be able to appear internal to an XP. For example,

(7.) *gakusei-*ne*-ga
Student-*ne*-Obj.

In (7.), *ne* appears word-internally between the particle, *ga,* and its preceding noun, *gakusei* (student). Endo would also predict that the following example would be ungrammatical.

[2] To say "XP" means that "X" is a variable for any categorical way of distinguishing words such as a noun or adjective, and "P" stands for a phrase. For example, an NP would stand for a noun phrase.

(8.) ? Sono-*ne* jugyou-wo yasunda gakusei-ga sukida.
That-*ne* class-Obj. rested student-Obj. like
I like the student who skipped that class.

Because *ne* intervenes between *sono* (that) and *jugyou* (class), which constitute the phrase "that class," this would come in the middle of an XP and thus be ungrammatical to Endo.

2.2.2 Nishiguchi (2010)

Meanwhile, Nishiguchi (2010) claims that *ne* "may attach either to a verb, a modal, or a tense marker which fall in the end of sentences," but *ne* "can also attach to case markers." An example of a verb followed by *ne* is given in (1. b.). Example (9) shows *ne* following a modal:

(9.) Ken-ga hanashi-ta-rashii-*ne*.
Ken-NOM speak-PAST-EVI-PAR
"It seems Ken has spoken, hasn't he?" (Nishiguchi (2010))

In (9.) the modal is attached to the end of the verb. An example of *ne* attached to a tense marker is:

(10.) Emiko-wa Ayaka-wo mi-te, Ayaka-wa Emiko-wo mita-*ne*.
Emiko-Subj. Ayaka-Obj. saw-Conj., Ayaka-Subj. Emiko-Obj. saw-*ne*
Emiko saw Ayaka, and Ayaka saw Emiko.

The tense marker, *-ta*, is attached to the end of the verb. An example of *ne* attaching to a case marker is also in (2.) where it is attached to *watashi-wa* (I). According to Nishiguchi's hypothesis, *ne* would not be able to attach to a verb, modal, or tense marker that falls in the middle of a sentence because he states that it can attach to *ne* coming at the end of a sentence.

Next is an example of a relative clause that contains the verb at the end of the clause instead of at the end of the sentence.

(11.) ?Watashi-wa sensei-kara moratta-*ne* hon-wo yonda.
I-Subj. teacher-from received-*ne* book-Obj. read.
I read the book I received from my teacher.

In this example, *ne* is attached to the verb, *moratta* (received), which is at the end of the relative clause, and so Nishiguchi would predict that it would not be acceptable to Japanese speakers. This suggests that according to Nishiguchi, verbs that occur sentence-internally, such as between a relative clause and the noun it modifies, are ungrammatical. This also means that Nishiguchi would find (6.) to be ungrammatical as the verb *yasunda* is sentence-internal.

2.2.3 Yasui (2014)

Yasui (2014) addresses the question of *ne's* placement after a relative clause explicitly and claims that *ne* "cannot merge with an embedded clause," but the particle "can attach to major constituents of various categories with a pause" and can occur "clause-finally." Because she does not define "major constituents," or what type of clauses *ne* can attach to when she says "clause-finally" her definition is unclear. (11.) is an instance that Yasui would predict to be ungrammatical because it appears between the embedded clause, "I received from my teacher" and "the book." We can compare Yasui's claim this to Endo's claim, in that (11.) would be considered grammatical to Endo because *ne* is at the end of a verb phrase. This is because Endo's claim would predict that *ne* could attach to the end of any phrase compared to Yasui's claim, which excludes *ne* coming between a relative clause and its following noun.

From these scholars' contradicting hypotheses, there does not seem to be a consensus regarding *ne*'s syntactic constraints. Table 1 presents each scholar's main hypotheses about where *ne* can appear in a sentence, and so we can see that there are clear disagreements. *Ne* occurring after a relative clause seems the most controversial, as both Nishiguchi and Yasui would not predict that *ne* can occur at that site. All scholars would predict that *ne* can occur sentence-finally. *Ne* occurring after a noun phrase would comply with Endo and Nishiguchi's

claims, but it is unclear if it would comply with Yasui's claim because she does not define what "major constituents" *ne* can attach to.

Scholar	Post-NP	Post-Relative Clauses	Sentence-Final
Endo	!	!	!
Nishiguchi	!	*	!
Yasui	?	*	!

Table 1. Scholars' Hypotheses about the Placement of *Ne*.[3]

Disagreement about *ne's* usage makes it confusing for second language learners who are aware of its usage sentence-internally and want to be able to use it fluently. And so with the corpus study and survey I will determine if there are any syntactic constraints by seeing how native Japanese speakers actually use *ne* in colloquial speech and asking for their own grammaticality judgments.

3. Methodology

My research includes two main components: a corpus study and a survey of grammaticality judgments. The purpose of the corpus study is to see where *ne* is actually used in spontaneous speech. I will look at the frequency of occurrences, but this does not necessarily mean that *ne* occurring more in one position is more grammatical than it occurring over another. For example, if there are 100 occurrences of *ne* sentence-finally, but only 10 occurrences of *ne* after the subject, this does not mean *ne* sentence-finally is more grammatical. This might be because *ne* occurring after the subject does not occur often, but this does not mean it is any less grammatical. Therefore, the survey will ask native Japanese speakers for grammaticality judgments regarding *ne* being placed in different positions in a sentence. Because both studies also contain different populations, I do not expect the results to align with each other but instead

[3] !: *Ne* would be considered grammatical in this site. ?: *Ne*'s grammaticality is unclear; *: *Ne* would be considered ungrammatical.

am interested in how it is used in spontaneous speech and what speakers' judgments are about its usage.

3.1 Corpus

The Basic Transcription System for Japanese (BTSJ) contains 294 transcriptions of spontaneous Japanese speech, of which I have selected 36 for analysis (approximately 1/8 of the corpus). The files were divided into seven categories based on degree of familiarity. I followed the order of the corpus author's categorization and tried to select a representative sample of transcripts from each of these main categories. For example, from the Teacher-Student category, there was at least one file of each type of conversation amongst genders, and so I selected one of each. On the other hand, from the Intimate category, there were only transcripts of female-female conversations, and so I selected three of those files. I also did not look at files that contained nonnative speakers. Each transcription file consists of two speakers with varying degrees of familiarity and differences in gender, as presented in Table 2.

Degree of Familiarity	# of Files	# of Male-Male Conversations	# of Female-Female Conversations	# of Male-Female Conversations
Close Friends	6	3	3	0
First Meeting	3	1	0	2
Friends	3	0	3	0
Intimate	3	0	3	0
Teacher-Student	3	1	1	1
Unacquainted	3	0	3	0
Unspecified-Telephone	15	3	12	0
Total	36	8	25	3

Table 2. Demographics of Transcription Files

3.2 Survey

The second part of my research consisted of a survey. I created the survey using the online survey website, SurveyMonkey. I sent the survey to my friends in Japan and also asked my Japanese instructor and Japanese language partner to send the survey to their friends and family in Japan. The survey was created in consultation with my Japanese language instructor, Aya McDaniel, and my Japanese language partner, Umehara Toshihiro, both from Emory University so that the survey would be the most natural sounding to Japanese speakers.

The survey consisted of two parts. The first part asked native Japanese speakers to perform grammaticality judgments based on sentences that contained *ne* in different places. For example:

(12.) Jugyou-ni it-te, neko-wo-*ne* mita
Class-to went-Conj. cat-Obj-*ne* saw
I went to class and saw a cat.

A.) *Shizen*/Natural B.) *Fushizen*/Unnatural C.) *Zettai-ni tsukawanai*/Can never be used

Although these choices do not explicitly ask speakers if they find the sentence grammatical or ungrammatical, after consulting with Aya McDaniel and Umehara Toshihiro, we found that this would be the most natural way for native Japanese speakers to understand what I was asking for. The survey also included two examples of instances where *ne* was placed word-internally, which is a position that is ungrammatical. This was to ensure that the respondents knew the difference between choices B.) and C.).

The second part of my survey asked respondents to place *ne* in two or more places in a sentence that does not already have *ne* in it. This was to force the respondents to put *ne* not only sentence-finally but also sentence-internally. For example:

(13.) Ani-ga tsukutta ryouri-wa oishi-katta.
Older brother-Subj. made meal-Subj. delicious-was
The meal my older brother made was delicious.

(13.) does not contain *ne*, and so respondents were asked to place *ne* in two or more places that they found to be the most natural.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Corpus

There were 2437 instances of *ne* occurring out of the 36 transcripts. Table 3 presents the distribution of the 2437 instances of *ne*.

Placement of *Ne*	Description	# of Instances	%
Final	*Ne* comes at the end of an utterance	1480	60.73
Post-Clause	*Ne* comes after a clause (relative clauses, etc.), but not at the end of the utterance	444	18.22
Post-Interjection	*Ne* comes after an interjection [*eto* (um), *ano* (uh), etc.]	164	6.73
Post-Topic/Subject	*Ne* comes after the topic/subject	87	3.57
Post-Transition	*Ne* comes after a transition word [*soshitara* (If so…), *soreni* (Moreover), etc.]	71	2.91
Alone	*Ne* is the only word in the utterance	64	2.63
Other	Includes *ne* coming after the direct object, postpositional particle/phrase, etc.	127	5.21

Table 3. Corpus Study Results.

The highest percentage was when *ne* was sentence final. The second highest percentage was when *ne* came after a sentence-internal clause, which can be seen in (14.).

(14.) Teiuka, ore-wa sono-ko-da, sono-ko, sono-ko, futari-no,
You know, I-Subj. that-kid-ending marker, that-kid, that-kid, both-ending particle,
mitai-*ne*, shashin-ga areba.
want to see-*ne*, picture-Obj. if-have.
You know, if I had a picture, I want to see those kids.
3-1 M05-M06

In (14.), *ne* comes after the clause, *mitai* (want to see). The third highest percentage was when *ne* came after an interjection. For example,

(15.) Etto-*ne*, saitama-nandesu.
Um-*ne*, Saitama-it-is.
Um, that is Saitama.
173-13 BM01-OF01

As expected, *ne* comes at the end of an utterance most frequently, but 39.27% of the instances occurred sentence-internally.

An interesting result of the corpus was that under the category, Post-Topic/Subject, 13 out of the 84 instances were of *ne* occurring after the case marker, *ga*, which marks the preceding noun as the subject of the sentence. The other 71 instances contained *ne* coming after the case marker, *wa*, which marks the topic of the sentence. This is an interesting result because some previous literature hypothesizes that topics marked by *wa* are more separate from the rest of the sentence (Jimenez-Fernandez 283). Because this is only the number of instances, we can look to the survey to see if there are any differences in grammaticality between the two.

4.2 Survey Part I

There were 26 responses to my survey. I have provided the demographics of the respondents in Tables 4-6. The respondents were primarily female, and the majority of the respondents were in their 20's. Most respondents were also from Hokkaido, Japan.

Gender	# of Respondents
Male	8
Female	17

Table 4. Gender of Respondents.

Age	Number of Respondents
20-29	15
30-39	9
40-49	0
50-59	1

Table 5. Age of Respondents.

Prefecture	Number of Respondents
Aichi	1
America (Respondent's Answer)	1
Hokkaido	14
Ibaraki	1
Kyoto	2
Osaka	4
Tokyo	2

Table 6. Prefecture of Respondents.

Table 7 presents the survey questions and the translation of the questions. Participants were provided the survey in Japanese and were given the following choices to make about the sentence: *shizen* (natural), *fushizen* (unnatural), and *zettai-ni tsukawanai* (can never be used). The information under "Placement of *Ne*" was not provided in the survey.

Question	Sentences	Placement of *Ne*
1	Watashi-*ne*-wa mainichi sutabakkusu-de ko-hi-wo I-*ne*-SUBJ everyday Starbucks-at coffee-Obj nondeiru. drink. I drink at Starbucks every day.	Word-Internal 1
2	Jugyou-ni it-te, neko-wo-*ne* mita Class-to went-Conj., cat-Obj-*ne* saw I went to class and saw a cat.	Post-Direct Object
3	Sono jugyou-wo yasunda-*ne* gakusei-ga sukida. That class-Obj. rested-*ne* student-Obj. like I like the student who skipped that class.	Post-Relative Clause 1
4	Watashi-wa-*ne* sensei-kara moratta hon-wo yonda. I-Subj.-*ne* teacher-from received book-Obj. read I read the book I received from my teacher.	Post-Subject
5	Watashi-wa John-to-*ne* Mary-wo mita. I-Subj. John-and-*ne* Mary-Obj. saw I saw John and Mary.	Post-PP1 (Conjunct)
6	Sono-*ne* jugyou-wo yasunda gakusei-ga sukida That-*ne* class-Obj. rested student-Obj. like I like the student who skipped that class.	Post-Determiner
7	Watashi-wa mainichi sutabakkusu-de-*ne* ko-hi-wo I-Subj every-day Starbucks-at-*ne* coffee-Obj. nondeiru. drink Every day I drink coffee at Starbucks.	Post-PP2 (Locative)
8	Emiko-wa Ayaka-wo mi-te, Ayaka-wa Emiko-Obj Emiko-Subj. Ayaka-Obj. saw-Conj. Ayaka-Subj. Emiko-wo mita-*ne*. saw-*ne* Emiko saw Ayaka, and Ayaka saw Emiko.	Sentence-Final
9	Watashi-wa John-*ne*-to Mary-wo mita. I-Subj. John-*ne*-Conj. Mary-Obj. saw. I saw John and Mary.	Word-Internal 2
10	Watashi-wa sensei-kara moratta-*ne* hon-wo yonda. I-Subj. teacher-from received-*ne* book-Obj. read. I read the book I received from my teacher.	Post-Relative Clause 2

Table 7. Survey Questions.

Table 8 presents the results of the first part of the survey. The numbers in parenthesis are scores I gave to quantify grammaticality of each placement of *ne.* The first column is the number of the question, while the second column states where *ne* has been placed in each sentence. The following three columns provide the number of respondents to each question. The number in parentheses in the first row of those three columns is the grammaticality score that I assigned to each type of response to provide a quantitative analysis of the results. I took the average of the scores and listed them in the final column.

Sentence	Placement of *ne*	Grammatical/Natural (2)	Unnatural/Questionable (1)	Can never use it/Ungrammatical (0)	Average Score
1	Word-Internal 1	0	1	25	0.04
2	Post-Direct Object	3	14	9	0.77
3	Post-Relative Clause 1	1	13	12	0.58
4	Post-Subject	13	13	0	1.5
5	Post-PP1[4] (Conjunct)	15	9	2	1.5
6	Post-Determiner	5	15	6	0.96
7	Post-PP2 (Locative)	15	8	3	1.46
8	Sentence-Final	14	8	4	1.38
9	Word-Internal 2	0	2	24	0.08
10	Post-Relative Clause 2	3	16	7	0.85

Table 8. Results of Survey Part I.

[4] "PP" stands for Postpositional and refers to phrases that end with a postpositional particle. Post-PP1 uses the particle *to*, which in Japanese directly translates as "with." In English this particle would be translated as "and," and so I will also refer to the phrase as a conjunct (Tsujimura 1996).

Table 9 presents the grammaticality scores from highest to lowest.

Placement of *ne*	Grammaticality Scoring (Highest-Lowest)
Post-Subject	1.5
Post-PP1 (Conjunct)	1.5
Post-PP2 (Locative)	1.46
Sentence-Final	1.38
Post-Determiner	0.96
Post-Relative Clause 2	0.85
Post-Direct Object	0.77
Post-Relative Clause 1	0.58
Word-Internal 2	0.08
Word-Internal 1	0.04

Table 9. Grammaticality Score Averages (Highest – Lowest).

We can see three main categories from Table 9. The highest grammaticality scores range from 1.5-1.38 and include the instances in which *ne* was considered the most grammatical. The lowest scores range from 0.08-0.04 and include the instances in which *ne* was considered ungrammatical. The intermediate scores range from 0.96-0.58 and include the instances in which *ne*'s grammaticality was unclear.

Although the survey results appear to be inconsistent with the corpus results, this is not necessarily the case. The corpus results presents data for where *ne* occurs in spontaneous speech. This does not mean that the instances that do not occur frequently are any less grammatical than instances where it occurs frequently. For example, *ne* occurring after the topic/subject of a sentence for only 3.57% of the corpus does not mean it is less grammatical than *ne* occurring sentence-finally. It simply means that it occurs less in spontaneous speech,

and so a direct comparison between the two results cannot be done as they were looking at different aspects of *ne*.

First I will present the lowest-scoring category from the survey, which is when *ne* was word-internal, or between a noun and another particle.

(16.) *Watashi-*ne*-wa mainichi sutabakkusu-de ko-hi-wo nondeiru.
I-*ne*-SUBJ everyday Starbucks-at coffee-Obj drink.
I drink at Starbucks every day.

(17.) *

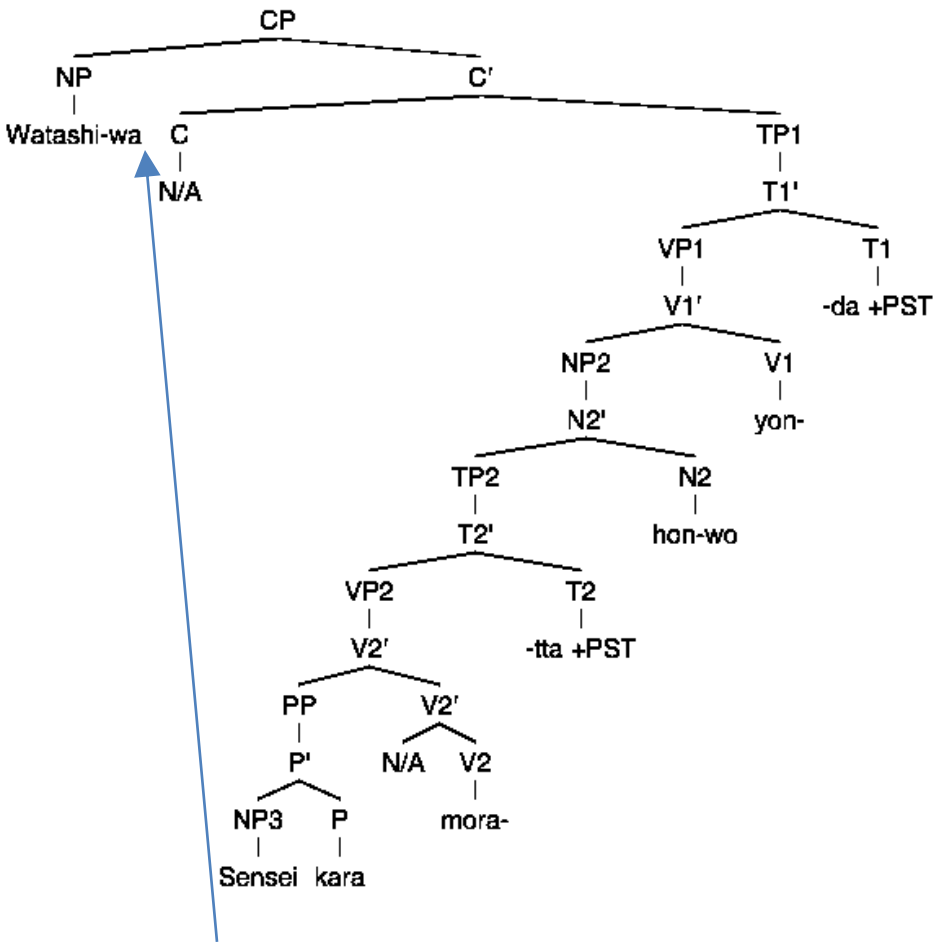
Endo (2007), Nishiguchi (2010), and Yasui (2014) would predict this result.

Now I will present the highest-scoring categories using sentence trees.[5] First, *ne* is considered the most grammatical when it comes after the subject of the sentence.

(18.) Watashi-wa-*ne* sensei-kara moratta hon-wo yonda.
I-Subj.-*ne* teacher-from received book-Obj. read
I read the book I received from my teacher.

[5] Sentence trees are used to represent the syntax of a sentence in linguistics. These trees are my analysis of the possible structure.

(19.)

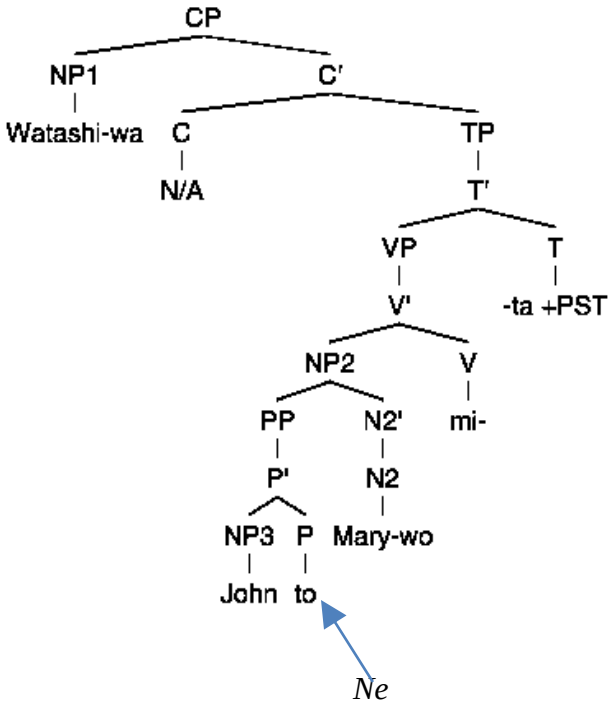


This shows that respondents agreed that *ne* can come after an NP that is the subject of the sentence and suggests the clear XP boundary of NP1 as one unit. As we can see in (19.), the topic of the sentence appears to be separate from the rest of the sentence, and so this may account for how *ne* is able to attach to the end of the subject easily. This also complies with the hypotheses of Endo (2007), Nishiguchi (2010), and Yasui (2014) who stated that *ne* can attach to an XP, case markers, and "major constituents" respectively.

Next, I will present *ne* coming after the first conjunct of a conjoined NP, which had the same grammaticality score as (18.).

(20.) Watashi-wa John-to-*ne* Mary-wo mita.
I-Subj. John-and-*ne* Mary-Obj. saw
I saw John and Mary.

(21.)



In (21.), *ne* comes after the postpositional phrase. From looking at this sentence tree, even though the placement of PP in (21.) seems to be very different from the placement of NP1 in (19.), they are actually both in specifier position.[6] This may suggest that *ne* is more grammatical when it comes after specifiers, as these phrases are not as deeply embedded in an XP.

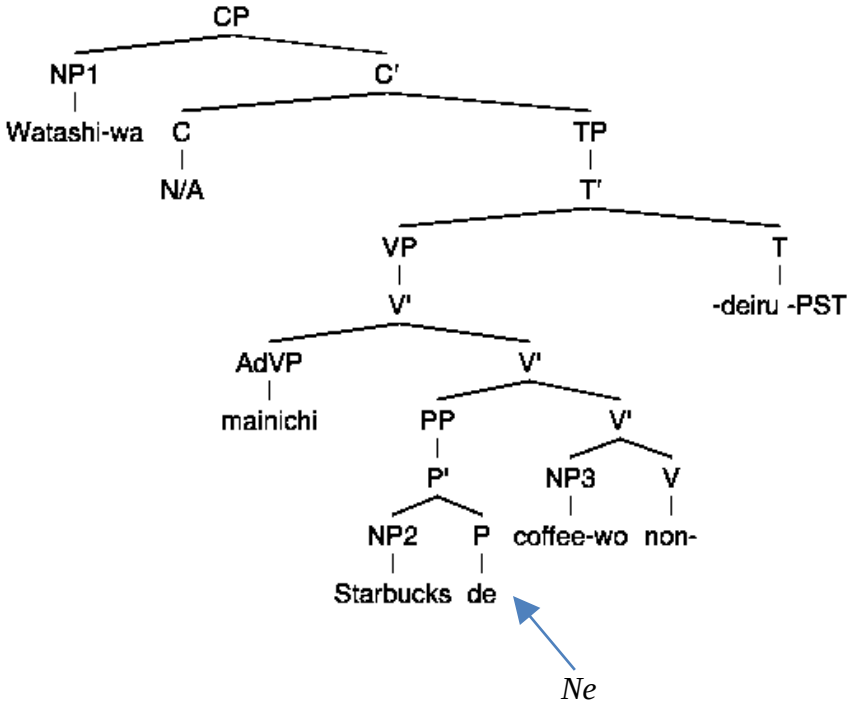
This complies with Endo (2007)'s claim that *ne* can attach to any XP, but whether or not this complies with Nishiguchi's claim is questionable. Nishiguchi has stated that *ne* can attach to case markers, but *to* is a postpositional particle. It can be assumed that the results of (21.) would comply with Yasui (2014)'s claim as she said *ne* can attach to "major constituents."

[6] When an XP branches off directly from the head phrase as opposed to branching off under an X' phrase, this is called the specifier position (Carnie 127).

The next example presents *ne* coming after the locative phrase, which received the third highest grammaticality score of 1.46.

(22.) Watashi-wa mainichi sutabakkusu-de-*ne* ko-hi-wo nondeiru.
I-Subj every day Starbucks-at-*ne* coffee-Obj. drink
Every day I drink coffee at Starbucks.

(23.)



In (23.), the locative particle phrase comes as an adjunct, and is embedded inside VP under V', but *ne* coming after the locative particle is still not attaching to the phrase under the lowest V' branch.[7] It is still at least one branch above, and so this could suggest that *ne* cannot easily insert itself into the lowest branch of its head XP, which in this case is VP. This example complies with Endo (2007)'s claim as he states that *ne* can attach to any XP. But similar to (20.), it is unclear whether this would comply with Nishiguchi's claim as *de* is not a case marker but rather

[7] An adjunct appears as a sister to X' and is often the site of information that is not essential to a sentence (Carnie 119).

a postpositional particle. It can also be assumed that the results would also comply with Yasui (2014)'s claim as she states that *ne* can attach to any major constituent, which includes PP.

I will now present the next highest grammaticality score, which was when *ne* was sentence-final.

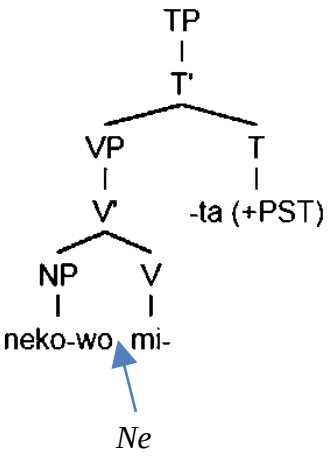
(24.) Emiko-wa Ayaka-wo mi-te, Ayaka-wa Emiko-wo mita-*ne*.
Emiko-Subj. Ayaka-Obj. saw-Conj. Ayaka-Subj. Emiko-Obj. saw-*ne*
Emiko saw Ayaka, and Ayaka saw Emiko.

Because (24.) did not receive the highest grammaticality scoring as expected, the semantics of the sentence may have been unfit for *ne* to occur sentence-finally. This scoring for *ne* still complies with each of the scholars' hypotheses who agree that *ne* can come sentence-finally.

The examples so far have shown the highest and lowest grammatical scores, now I will look at the intermediate-scoring categories. The first of the intermediate scores I will be looking at is when *ne* came after the object of the sentence, which received a grammaticality score of 0.77.

(25.) Jugyou-ni itte, neko-wo-*ne* mita
Class-to went, cat-Obj-*ne* saw.
I went to class and saw a cat.

(26.)



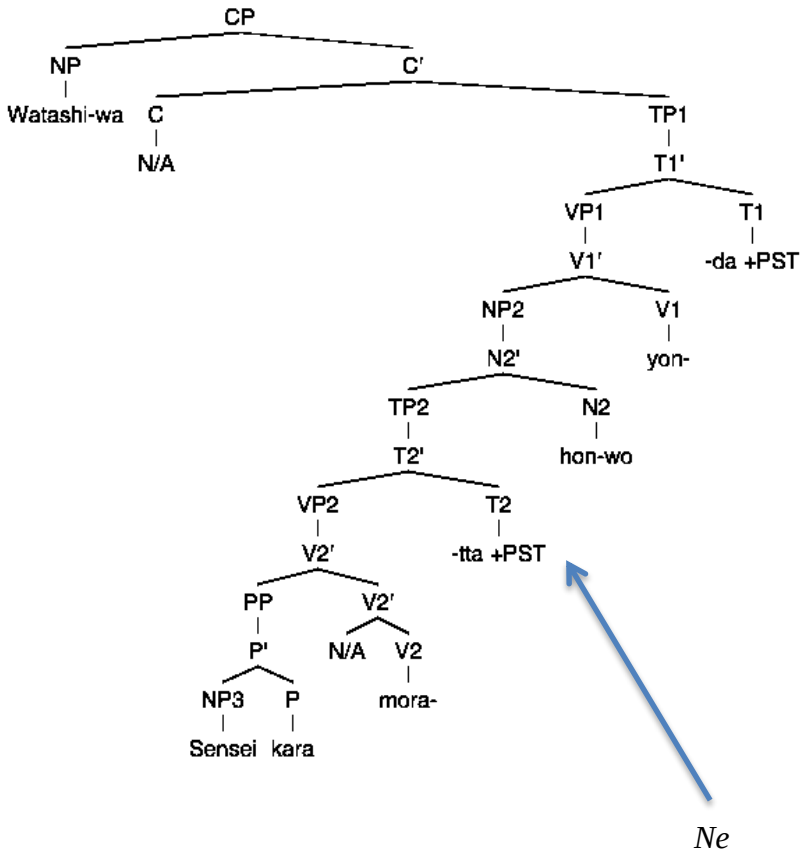
Although *ne* in (26.) does come after an XP, this still did not receive one of the highest scores. This may be because NP in (26.) is not in specifier position as NP1 in (19.) and PP in (21.) were. *Ne* in (26.) is attached to the object, which is the complement of the head phrase.[8] Because (26.)'s NP is further embedded in the head phrase in the complement position, this might make it harder for *ne* to attach compared to the specifier position. Instead of saying that this complies with each of the scholars' claims, *ne* can be described as not favoring the position after the object because it was not considered completely ungrammatical or grammatical.

The final example I will be presenting from the first part of the survey is when *ne* came after a relative clause. Because there were two examples, I will be presenting the example with the higher score of 0.85.

(27.) Watashi-wa sensei-kara moratta-*ne* hon-wo yonda.
I-Subj. teacher-from received-*ne* book-Obj. read.
I read the book I received from my teacher.

[8] Objects of sentences can be described as complements in sentence trees. Complements are sisters to the head of the phrase (Carnier 118).

(28.)



In (28.), *ne* is attached to the complement of NP2, which seems to follow the trend that *ne* cannot insert itself easily into phrases that are in complement position as in (26.). The actual structure of (28.) is unclear, as relative clauses can also be thought of as adjuncts, but the results of the survey suggest otherwise. Because (28.) shows that *ne* cannot easily attach to the relative clause similar to *ne* in (26.), this would support the idea that relative clauses, at least in Japanese, are actually complements as opposed to adjuncts.

It is difficult to say whether or not this result supports one scholar's hypothesis over the others. To say that this complies with Yasui (2014)'s claim is difficult because the results do seem to show that not all respondents would agree that this is grammatical, but there is also a portion of respondents who would say that it is grammatical. Nishiguchi also claims that *ne* can

attach to tense markers "which fall in the end of sentences," but because the results seem to be in the intermediate range, I also cannot say completely that this supports his claim. This also does not comply completely with Endo (2007)'s claim that *ne* can attach to any XP.

There are clear divisions in the grammaticality scores of *ne*'s sentence placement. There is a grouping of the highest scores, which ranged from 1.5-1.38, in which the respondents seemed to agree that *ne*'s placement in those sentences was grammatical, which may be due to the specifier position of each of those phrases. The second grouping, which ranged from 0.96-0.58, consists of cases that were not universally agreed to be grammatical or ungrammatical. And so these results could indicate that the positions of *ne* in the second grouping are more heavily embedded in certain phrases or constituents in a sentence. The final grouping, which ranged from 0.08-0.04, is of examples of *ne* that are considered to be clearly ungrammatical. The differences between groupings might indicate that *ne* can be attached to positions that are the most grammatical, and the more questionable spots in a sentence might only allow *ne* to be inserted depending on semantics and context.

4.3 Survey Part II

The results of the second part of my survey also indicate that *ne* is most grammatical after the subject or topic of a sentence. The following is the first sentence of the second part of my survey that was presented to participants.

(29.) Ani-ga tsukutta ryouri-wa oishi-katta.
Older brother-Subj. made meal-Subj. delicious-was
The meal my older brother made was delicious.

Sentence	Placement of *ne*	# of Responses
Ani-ga tsukutta ryouri-wa-*ne* oishi- Older brother-Subj. made meal-Subj.-*ne* delicious- katta. was The meal my older brother made was delicious.	Post-Subject of Main Clause	17
Ani-ga-*ne* tsukutta ryouri-wa oishi- Older brother-Subj.-*ne* made meal-Subj. delicious- katta. was The meal my older brother made was delicious.	Post-Subject of Relative Clause	13
Ani-ga tsukutta ryouri-wa oishi- Older brother-Subj. made meal-Subj. delicious- Katta-*ne* was- *ne*. The meal my older brother made was delicious.	Sentence-Final	12
Ani-ga tsukutta-*ne* ryouri-wa oishi- Older brother-Subj. made-*ne* meal-Subj. delicious- katta. was The meal my older brother made was delicious.	Post-Relative Clause	4

Table 10. Results of Question 1 of Survey Part II.

Table 10 displays the results of the first question of the second part of my survey in which respondents were provided one sentence and asked to place *ne* in two or more places. The highest number of respondents placed *ne* after the subject of the main clause, which matches with the results of the first part of my survey. This seems to be a clear result as this judgment was reflected in both parts of the survey. Similar to the corpus, there is also a distinction between the use of *wa*, a topic marker, and *ga*, a subject marker. The position of *ne* coming after *wa*, received more responses, and so this could be because the topic of the sentence is even further separated from the sentence than the subject of a clause is. *Ne* occurring after the relative clause also echoes the first part of my survey as few respondents chose to place it in this position. Again, similar to the first part of my survey, *ne* coming sentence-finally was not the most common response, but this may be due to the differing semantics of *ne* being used sentence-internally compared to sentence-finally.

I will now present the second sentence as well as the results.

(30.) Tokyo-ni it-te, kaimono-wo shita.
Tokyo-to went-Conj., shopping-Obj. did
I went to Tokyo and shopped.

Sentence	Placement of *ne*	# of Responses
Tokyo-ni it-te-*ne*, kaimono-wo Tokyo-to went-Conj.-*ne*, shopping-Obj. shita. did I went to Tokyo and shopped.	Post-1st Conjunction Clause	22
Tokyo-ni it-te, kaimono-wo-*ne* Tokyo-to went-Conj., shopping-Obj.-*ne* shita did I went to Tokyo and shopped.	Post-Direct Object	10
Tokyo-ni it-te, kaimono-wo Tokyo-to went-Conj., shopping-Obj. shita-*ne* did-*ne* I went to Tokyo and shopped.	Sentence-Final	9
Tokyo-ni-*ne* it-te, kaimono-wo Tokyo-to-*ne* went-Conj., shopping-Obj. shita did I went to Tokyo and shopped.	Post-Postposition Particle (Indirect Object)	5

Table 11. Results of Question 2 of Survey Part II

Respondents placed *ne* after the first clause the most frequently. This matches with the results of the first part of the survey because in part one, *ne* coming after the conjunct in a conjoined phrase received the highest grammaticality score. That *ne* was placed after the direct object 10 times also correlates with the first part of the study. In the first part, *ne* coming after the direct object received an intermediate score. In the second part, 10 responses may also be considered an intermediate score, especially in comparison to *ne* coming after the first conjunction clause. Interestingly, when the respondents correctly placed *ne* in at least two places, when *ne* was sentence-final, it was always preceded by *ne* coming after the first clause. The results of the second question of the survey thus favored *ne* appearing after the first clause in the

sentence. Because the first clause functions similarly to a sentence, semantically, this was probably a more appropriate place for *ne,* as opposed to sentence-finally.

5. Conclusion

In the following bulleted list, I will present the main findings of my research.

- *Ne* favors attaching to the subject, conjunct, and locative phrases, which are either specifiers or adjuncts. This is evident from the results of both parts of the survey. Specifier and adjunct are sites in which the phrase is considered to be more separate from the sentence, and this would make it more natural for *ne* to attach there.
- There is a clear distinction between subjects and objects in a sentence as evidenced by the survey. Even though the subject and object of a sentence are both NPs, *ne* behaved differently with each. Respondents favored *ne* attaching to the subject as opposed to the object.
- The results comply with the idea that *ne* has other semantic uses beyond seeking confirmation or agreement. This is evident because *ne* occurring sentence-finally in the second part of the survey results did not have the most placements. Because of *ne's* most common position sentence-finally, I expected *ne* to be placed the most sentence-finally. The semantics of the sentence may have created a situation in which *ne* occurring sentence-internally was the most grammatical position.

In both parts of the survey, the results indicate that *ne* favors the position after the subject of a sentence. This may be due to the idea that the subject of a sentence is in specifier position and thus appears more separate from the rest of a sentence. This can be broken down even further to

suggest that topics are also positions where *ne* can attach more easily as they are further separated from the sentence opposed to subjects.

There seem to be several positions in which *ne* is considered questionable—when it appears after a modifying clause, and after the object of the sentence. This suggests that *ne's* syntactic constraints should be described more in terms of where *ne* is favored to be placed, rather than in terms of where it is grammatical or ungrammatical. Therefore, the results do not clearly comply with Endo, Nishiguchi, or Yasui's claims; rather, they indicate that *ne* favors certain positions in a sentence.

We can look at Table 12 to review the scholars' hypotheses. The results would actually comply the least with Endo's judgment as he says *ne* can appear after any XP, but the results show that it cannot appear easily after the object of a sentence or after a relative clause. The same can be said for Nishiguchi's judgment that *ne* can attach after case markers; the results show that it cannot easily attach after every case marker. Yasui's claim is unclear because she does not exactly define "major constituents." Because the results showed that *ne* coming after relative clauses was not completely considered grammatical, Endo's judgment is unsupported by the results. Thus, the results most clearly conform to Nishiguchi and Yasui.

Scholar	Post-NP Case Marker	Post-Relative Clauses	Sentence-Final
Endo	!	!	!
Nishiguchi	!	*	!
Yasui	?	*	!

Table 12. Scholars' Hypotheses about the Placement of *Ne*.

There is also possible evidence of the semantic differences of *ne.* The results showed that the semantics of the sentence also allowed for *ne* to be more grammatical sentence-internally. The results support the notion of *ne* having varying semantic features that affect its syntactic placement in a sentence.

This research is beneficial in demonstrating that model that consider *ne* to be a sentence-final particle are insufficient to explain its usage, particularly in colloquial speech. I do agree that Japanese textbooks should still state that *ne* does primarily occur sentence-finally to seek confirmation or agreement, but they should also state that in colloquial speech, *ne* can occur sentence-internally and in this case would have different semantic uses. This research has helped to further show the complications of *ne* and the need for a clearer way of explaining its usage.

5.1 Directions for Future Work

From the corpus and the survey, there was clearly more instances of files of women speaking and female respondents. Because this may have affected the results, in future work I would like to also focus on how gender may have affected the grammaticality and even positions where *ne* can be used. There may be spots where *ne* is considered grammatical for women but not for men or that women tend to favor placing *ne* in one position over another compared to men.

Because of the three groupings of the results from the survey in future work I would focus more on the sentences that received intermediate grammaticality scores from my survey. Because respondents found *ne* placed after the relative clause and after the object to be of a similar level of grammaticality, I would create another survey that tested this judgment further. This would also help to clarify the question of whether or not relative clauses are represented as

complements or adjuncts in a sentence tree as I would provide more examples to test this further. I would also have multiple sentences to test each placement of *ne* instead of just one sentence as the survey only took respondents 3 minutes to complete.

In addition to another survey, I would also like to interview native Japanese speakers to hear their judgments about *ne* occurring in certain positions. This might also help to reveal semantically why they would prefer *ne* to occur in one position over another. Thus in future work, I would like to continue focusing on this question of where *ne* can appear sentence-internally as well as focusing on the effects of gender on the result.

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