Self-Addressed Questions & Honorifications

The case of Japanese daroo-ka/desyoo-ka

Chen-An Chang & Regine Eckardt

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Introduction

1. SAQs are characterized as "uttered in the absence of addressee" in the literature.

2. Daroo is an evidential modal which expresses speaker's surmise, desyoo is an honorific form of daroo.

(1) Kare-wa kuru daroo
    he-TOP come MOD ‘(I think) he will come.’
Introduction

3. A *daroo-ka* Q can only be interpreted as a SAQ, not ISQ (Hara 2019), but she only tests the context where speaker is alone.

(2) Kagi-wa dokoni aru (no) *daroo* ka?
   key-TOP where be C MOD Q
   ‘(I wonder) where the keys are.’ (= SAQ)

4. A *desyoo-ka* Q can be interpreted as ISQ or SAQ (Oguro 2017), but no SAQ context is offered.

(3) Dare-ga kuru *desyoo* ka?
   who-NOM come MOD.POLITE Q
   ‘I wonder who will come.’ (= SAQ) or ‘Who will come?’ (= ISQ)
Main Issues

- Almost any question (in any language) can always be solitarily uttered. Therefore, in the present literature, the impact of a second (higher) person in SAQ contexts remains open.
- The use of honorific markers in SAQ seems odd, given that a speaker utters a question to herself while respecting herself.
- It remains unknown how a SAQ marker (i.e. speaker = addressee) can be consistent with an honorific marker (i.e. speaker ≠ addressee) in desyoo-ka questions.
Research Questions:
We wanted to know how acceptable *daroo/desyoo-ka Q* are if we vary the following two factors:

1. how well do speakers like them in ISQ contexts, as opposed to “talk to self” kinds of contexts?
2. what is the impact of a second person?
   - In ISQ contexts, a second person is needed.
   - In talk-to-self situations, a bystander is optional.
Stimuli Contexts

- **ISQ (information-seeking question: the ad. knows the answer and the sp. expects that ad knows the answer)**
  Taro wants to watch TV, but he can’t find the remote control. Taro’s wife usually knows where it is. So, Taro goes to ask his wife: “Where is the remote *daroo-ka/desyoo-ka*?”

- **SAQ₁ (Speaker is alone)**
  Taro is alone at home. He wants to watch TV, but he can’t find the remote. He asks himself: “Where is the remote *daroo-ka/desyoo-ka*?”

- **SAQ₂ (There is a bystander, but speaker is addressing herself: the by. doesn’t know the answer and the sp. doesn’t expect that by. knows the answer)**
  Taro’s friend Miyagawa is visiting Taro at home for the first time. They decide to watch TV, but Taro can’t find the remote. Taro murmurs: “Where is the remote *daroo-ka/desyoo-ka*?”
Materials & Methods

1. A naturalness rating survey (on a 7-point Likert scale, latin-square design).
2. Dependent variables: Judgment
3. Independent variable: bystander(+/Hon), expressions (daroo-ka/desyoo-ka), illocu.context types(ISQ/SAQ₁/SAQ₂)
4. 72 target items(3 illocu.contexts types x 2 expressions x 12 contexts)
5. The factor ‘bystander’ in ISQ and SAQ₂ varied for equal or higher person (e.g. a friend is changed to be a professor.)
Results

Overall, we had 74 native Japanese speakers (average age: 35.2, SD = 12, 44 females, 30 males) answered our survey.

Figure 1: Results of SAQ study
Interim Summary

**Good/Expected:**

- correlation between status of bystander (equal/higher) and *desyoo* (bad/good).
- talking to oneself counts as “talking to an equal.”

**Surprising:**

- both *desyoo* and *daroo* were perfectly acceptable in information seeking questions.
- subjects tendentially dispreferred both *daroo* and *desyoo* in SAQ with a higher bystander.

→ Are *desyoo-ka* questions ever used in non-information-seeking contexts at all?
Corpus Evidence: desyoo-ka Q

Murakami: *Killing Commendatore*

The protagonist (P) is on a quest for a missing girl. The mythical commendatore orders P to kill him in order to achieve his aim. While the commendatore is certain that this will work, P is hesitant, asking himself loudly in the presence of the commendatore:

(4) Soo umaku mikomi doorini monogoto-ga so good expectation as things-NOM rensashite-kureru-mono-desyoo-ka?
lead-BENF-NMLZ-daroo.HON-ka
‘(I’m not sure what sort of chain of events you’re talking about, but) I wonder if these will lead me in the direction you anticipate? (Even if I kill you, there’s no guarantee...’)

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Self-Addressed Questions & Honorifications
The protagonist (P) and his acquaintance Menshiki inspect a well-pit where, according to Menshiki, a monk in ancient times committed suicide. While they find no corpse, they find antique ceremonial bells which, according to Menshiki, were left behind by the monk. P doesn’t trust this story and continues asking.

(5) Moshi soo-da-to shi-ta-ra, sono sokushinbutsu-wa if that-COP-COMP do-PST-if this priest-TOP tsumari miira-wa ittai doko-ni I.mean mummy-TOP on.earth where-DAT kie-ta-no-desyoo?
disappear-PST-NMLZ-daroo.HON ‘If that’s true, then where did the priest who died there – the mummy, I mean – disappear to?’

desyoo-Q express joint-wondering in a formal ”register”. 
Proposed Analysis

**LF:**

- *daroo* must scope over *ka* in LF à la Uegaki & Roelofsen (2018)
- *ka* locates in C node postition à la Miyagawa (2012)
- The Force head hosts the feature *decl.* or *int.* à la Zimmermann (2008)
- With *decl.* the epistemic reference point is the speaker. With *int*, the epistemic reference point is the addressee or addressee and speaker together à la Zimmermann (2008)

**We propose:** *daroo* moves from CP to SPEC-ForceP: (i) modifying the strength of commitment, and (ii) determining the epistemic reference point (i.e. hosting *decl.* or *int.*)
Lexical Entries

- $\text{daroo} = \lambda p. \lambda w. \text{ASSUME}(\chi, p, w)$
- $\text{desyoo} = \lambda p. \lambda w. \text{ASSUME}(\chi, p, w) \uparrow \text{sp}(c) \propto \text{ad}(c)$
- $(\chi$ can be speaker, hearer or both, depending on hosting which feature $\text{decl.}/\text{int.})$
- $(\uparrow$: expressive meaning, $\propto$: a relation that sp(c) is formally distanced from ad(c), and sp(c) respects ad(c).)$
- $\text{EXPECTS an input from ad(c)}$
- $\text{EXPECTS an input from ad(c)}$
Daroo in declaratives:

(6) Kare-wa kuru daroo. \( \downarrow \)
he-TOP come MOD
‘(I think) he will come.’

1. \( \{ <p \bullet \lambda w.\text{ASSUME}(\chi,p,w)> \mid p \in [[\text{he will come}]]^c \} \)
2. decl-feature, the epistemic referent: sp.
   2.1 \( \chi \) is speaker.
3. due to \( \downarrow \), sp(c) does not expect an input from ad(c)
Daroo-ka in SAQ/ISQ:

(7) Kagi-wa dokoni aru (no) daroo ka? ↓
    key-TOP where be C MOD Q
    '(I wonder) where the keys are.'

1. $[\text{where is the key?}]^c = \{\lambda w.\text{Key-At-Home}(w), \lambda w.\text{Key-On-Desk}(w), \lambda w.\text{Key-In-Office}(w)\}$

2. *daroo* contributes:
   $$\begin{align*}
   &\{<p \bullet \lambda w.\text{ASSUME}(\chi,p,w)> \mid p \in [\text{where is the key?}]^c\}
   \end{align*}$$

3. int-feature, the epistemic referents: ad, sp & ad.
   3.1 If $\chi$ are speaker & addressee, then we can derive SAQ reading.
   3.2 If $\chi$ is addressee only, then we get ISQ reading.

4. due to $\downarrow$, sp(c) does not expect an input from ad(c)
Desyoo-ka in SAQ/ISQ:

\[(8)\quad \text{Dare-ga} \quad \text{kuru} \quad \text{desyoo} \quad \text{ka?} \quad \backslash \quad \text{who-NOM} \quad \text{come} \quad \text{MOD.POLITE} \quad \text{Q} \quad \text{‘I wonder who will come.’} \quad (= \text{SAQ}) \quad \text{or} \quad \text{‘Who will come?’} \quad (= \text{ISQ})\]

1. \([\lambda w.\text{Luther-come}(w), \lambda w.\text{Diego-come}(w), \lambda w.\text{Vanya-come}(w)]^c\]

2. \text{desyoo} contributes:
   \[
   \{<p \bullet \lambda w.\text{ASSUME}(\chi, p, w)> \diamond \text{sp(c) } \sim \text{ad(c)} \mid p \in [\lambda w.\text{Luther-come}(w), \lambda w.\text{Diego-come}(w), \lambda w.\text{Vanya-come}(w)]^c\}
   \]

3. \text{int-feature, the epistemic referents: ad, sp & ad.}
   3.1 If \(\chi\) are speaker & addressee, then we can derive SAQ reading.
   3.2 If \(\chi\) is addressee only, then we get ISQ reading.

4. \text{sp(c) is socially distanced from ad(c) and sp(c) respects ad(c)}

5. \text{due to } \chi, \text{ sp(c) does not expect an input from ad(c)}
Gist of the Analysis:

- *daroo* contributes a inferential evidential, roughly glossed as “I assume”
- in questions, *ASSUME* can be oriented to speaker and addressee (SAQ reading and joint speculation, see Eckardt 2020)
- in questions, *ASSUME* can also be oriented to the addressee alone.
- *Daroo/ desyoo* can figure in ISQ. Such ISQ allow the addressee to rest their answer on assumptions.
- Prosody harmonizes with the speaker’s intention (data from literature; were not tested in study) …

= in line with surprising finding nr.1
= missing on the intuition that *daroo* marks “self-addressed questions”
A Methodical Problem

(9) A is packing her backpack for a day trip. B is watching. A: Will it rain today?
    I wonder whether it will rain today.
    I’d just like to know whether it will rain today.
    If only I knew whether it will rain.
    B: The forecast predicts sunshine.

→ direct questions:
  ▶ politeness: indirect expressions of need of information.
  ▶ cooperativity: provide information, if possible.
→ Hypothesis: If you want to test questions, use urgent questions.
UrgentQ pilot study

1. Our results show: *daroo-ka* can be used as ISQs, which contradict to Hara (2019).

2. We would like to know why Japanese informants find ISQs with *daroo-ka* acceptable/natural.

3. Hence, we decided to test the contrast between *daroo-ka* questions and plain questions in a more specific type of contexts; namely contexts where the urgency of a question disallows the possibility of performing indirect speech acts.

4. We called these urgent questions (UrgentQs).
Research Question:
Are *daroo-ka* questions acceptable in urgentQ contexts?

Hypothesis:
We hypothesized that our informants should judge the *daroo* questions as more marked in such situations, due to the extra pragmatic load they create for interpretation.
**Materials & Methods**

1. A naturalness rating survey (on a 7-point Likert scale, Between-Subjects Design)

2. 12 target items (2 expressions (daroo-ka v.s. plain-form) x 6 contexts)

**UrgentQ context:**
Friend A is now in the classroom. Suddenly, friend B runs into their classroom and yells, “The classroom in the corner is on fire.”

► B: ”Where is the fire extinguisher daroo-ka?”

► B: ”Where is the fire extinguisher?”
Results

Overall, we had 8 native Japanese speakers answered our survey.

Figure 2: Results of UrgentQ study
Summary

Take-away message:

▶ Not every “question context” really tests for direct question acts. Many also tolerate indirect questions. Only “urgent” question contexts cleanly test for ISQ.

Follow-up study:

▶ We aim to revise our first study and test urgent questions in ISQ contexts. The question contexts where A asks Q to B who is in charge of answering Q; for instance:
  ▶ help-desk personnel in shops for questions Q about the shop’s offers.
  ▶ parents for questions Q about the biographic data of their children.
References

- Hara, Y. 2019. Daroo ka↑: The interplay of deictic modality, sentence type, prosody and tier of meaning.
- McCready, E. 2019. The Semantics and Pragmatics of Honorification. OUP.