

Historical analysis of the colloquial quotative marker *tte*

AOKI Keiko

Queen's University

Abstract:

This article analyzes the origin of the colloquial quotative marker *tte* with numerous philological data taken from literature written from 720 AD, the oldest written text, to the present. Although *tte* is a colloquial variant for the quotative particle *to*, it has developed several new functions in Modern Japanese. Some argue that the origin of *tte* is *tote*, but they fail to explain how *tote* developed into *tte*. Some speculate that *tte* was derived from *to (iu)*, but it is still unexplained what kind of phonological change has happened to *to (iu)* to become *tte*. In this article, I suggest an alternative hypothesis: *te*, an Old Japanese Eastern dialect for the quotative *to*, as the origin of the modern *tte*. The dialectal quotative *te* emerges again in Meiji literature along with an interchangeable variant, *tte*, after 1000 years of absence, when native Tokyo authors began to write in their spoken language. This movement, *genbun icchi undou* “the movement of unification of written and spoken language,” is thought to have brought the dialectal quotative marker *te* to the surface again with new grammaticalized usage.

1. Introduction

Tte has various functions in Modern Japanese. The main functions of *tte* will be summarised as the following: 1) quotative marker, 2) hearsay marker, 3) a contracted form of *to iu* in the “N1 *to iu* N2” structure, 4) topic introducer¹, and 5) assertive sentence-final particle. Observe below².

- (1) quotation: *eibunka desu ka tte yoku kikareta.*
English literature division COP Q tte often ask-PASS-PAST
‘I was often asked, “Are you from the Department of English Literature?”’
- (2) hearsay: *rii sensei mou osienai n da tte.*
teacher already teach-NEG NM COP tte
‘I heard that Prof. Lee won’t teach any more.’
- (3) N1 *tte* N2: *koko ni nigete kita tte uwasa mo arimasu kedo....*
here to escape come-PAST tte rumour also exist but
‘There is a rumour that I escaped it and came here, but....’
- (4) topic: *kotti no ringo tte anmari oisikunai yo ne.*
here GEN apple tte very delicious-NEG FP FP
‘The apples here aren’t very delicious, are they?’
- (5) assertion: *zettai sonna no uso da tte.*
absolutely such NM lie COP tte
‘It’s absolutely wrong!’

Some linguists treat *tte* as derived from *tote*. Indeed, *tote* becomes *tte* after applying a syncope, a common phonological sound change. Some linguists, however, describe *tte* as a “colloquial variant of *to* (*iu*)” (Alfonso 1966, Endo-Simon 1987, Makino and Tsutsui 1986, Maynard 1991). They treat *tte* as derived from *to* (*iu*), based on the functional similarity between the two. This treatment may be synchronically correct, but it does not explain what kind of phonological process was involved in the change from *to* (*iu*) into *tte*.

In this article, I analyze the uses of *to*, *tote*, and *tte* historically and propose an alternative hypothesis: the modern *tte* was developed from *te*, an ancient Eastern dialectal form for the standard quotative *to*. This hypothesis assumes that the dialectal form had survived in the speech of Eastern people until its appearance in literature of the Meiji era, when a movement called “genbun icchi undoo” (unification of spoken and written language) took place in Tokyo. During the movement, many important writers of the time began to write in their spoken language, i.e., in Eastern dialect.

In the ensuing sections, I analyze the distribution of *to*, *tote*, and *tte* synchronically and diachronically. Section 3 provides data taken from various texts written from the 8th century to the 20th century to show that *tte* has been derived from *te*.

2. Synchronic study of *to*, *tote*, and *tte*

The occurrence of *tote* is very rare in written/spoken texts of Modern Japanese, and it is limited to a few fixed expressions, such as “sari tote” (nevertheless) and “-ta/-kuta/-da + *tte*” (even though)³. (Martin 1975) *To* and *tte*, on the other hand, are observed very frequently in the modern written/oral texts, and of the two, *tte* is dominant in colloquial speech (Alfonso 1966, Aoki 1986, Endo-Simon 1987, Makino and Tsutsui 1986, Maynard 1991, Miura 1974).

Tte seems to have closer relationship with *to* than with *tote*. *To* and *tte* both mark the content of what one says, e.g., “*iu*” (to say), what one hears, e.g., “*kiku*” (to hear), and what one has in mind, e.g., “*omou* (to think). Observe the following pair of sentences.

- (6) a. *Taroo wa iku to itta.*
 TP go QT say-PAST
 b. *Taroo wa iku tte itta.*

TP go tte say-PAST
 ‘Taroo said that he will go.’

(6b) sounds more casual than (6a) and thus this *tte* is named as “colloquial quotation marker.” (Makino and Tsutsui 1986) As seen above, both *to* and *tte* serve as a quotative marker in Modern Japanese. They differ, however, in some ways. First, a verb of saying is obligatory after *to*, but it is optional after *tte*.

- (7) a. *Taroo wa iku to itta.* --> **Taroo wa iku to.*⁴
 TP go QT say-PAST
 b. *Taroo wa iku tte itta.* --> *Taroo wa iku tte.*
 TP go tte say-PAST

This omission of “iu” has led *tte* to develop a function to mark the content of what someone has said or one has heard in the sentence-final position. It often takes the form of “nominalizer *n* + copula *da* + *tte*,” which can be translated “I heard ...”. This function of *tte* is named as “hearsay marker” (See (2)). In “N1 to iu N2” construction, also, a verb of saying, “iu,” is obligatory after *to* but is optional after *tte*.

- (8) a. [*Yamada to iu hito*] *ga kita.* --> **[Yamada to hito] ga kita.*
 QT say person NOM come-PAST
 b. [*Yamada tte iu hito*] *ga kita.* --> [*Yamada tte hito*] *ga kita.*
 tte say person NOM come-PAST
 ‘A person called Yamada came.’

Secondly, when *tte* is followed by a string of morphemes “iu no wa”, not only the verb of saying but also the nominalizer “no” and the topic marker “wa” can be omitted. *To* fails to have such a function.

- (9) a. *ganguro* { *to iu no wa* / **to no wa* / **to* } *nan desu ka.*
 {QT say NM TP/ QT NM TP/ QT} what COP Q
 b. *ganguro* { *tte iu no wa* / *tte no wa* / *tte* } *nan desu ka.*
 {tte say NM TP/ tte NM TP/ tte} what COP Q
 ‘What is the one called “ganguro”?’ (= What is the meaning of the word, “ganguro”?)

This *tte*, now functioning to mark a topic, is named “topic introducer.”⁵ As Makino and

Tsutsui (1986) correctly claim, a topic introducer *tte* differs from the topic marker “*wa*” in that its predicate must contain the speaker’s evaluation/judgement. Compare the following examples.

- (10)a. *Taroo no imoto { wa/ *tte } 10-sai da.*
 GEN younger sister { TP/ tte } 10 years old COP
 ‘Taroo’s younger sister is 10 years old.’
 b. *Taroo no imoto tte sugoku kawaii.*
 GEN younger sister tte very cute
 ‘Taroo’s younger sister is very cute.’

Tte in (10a) is ungrammatical since the predicate, “is 10 years old,” does not carry any kind of the speaker’s evaluation/judgement toward the topic.

The third difference between *to* and *tte* is that only *tte* can behave as a sentence-final particle that shows the speaker’s assertion. *Tte* marks the information which the speaker strongly wishes to convey to the person involved, while *to* does not have the function.

- (11) A: *ayu no sioyaki toka umai yo ne.*
 sweetfish GEN salt grill etc. delicious FP FP
 B: *sonna mon utteru no?*
 such thing sell be NM?
 A: *un.*
 yes
 B: *tiba dake zyanai?*
 only COP-NEG
 A: *ee? utteru tte!*
 huh? sell be tte
 A: ‘Sweetfish grilled with salt is delicious, isn’t it?’
 B: ‘Is it sold?’
 A: ‘Yes.’
 B: ‘It’s sold only in Chiba, isn’t it?’
 A: ‘Huh? It’s sold (everywhere)!’

Despite these differences, the basic function of *to* and *tte* are similar enough to convince linguists that *tte* is closely related to “*to* (iu).” Hayashi (1997) attributes this omission of “*iu*” (to say) to the frequent collocation of *to* and “*iu*.” This omission probably enabled *tte* to grammaticalize new functions such as a hearsay marker. Furthermore, the last two functions of *tte*, topic introducer and assertive sentence-final

particle ((10) and (11)), show that *tte* has undergone another form of grammaticalization, i.e., subjectification⁶.

3. Diachronic study of *to*, *tote* and *tte*

3.1 *TO*

Sansom (1928) speculates that the origin of *to* is a demonstrative pronoun corresponding to the English word “that”⁷. While functioning to indicate parity or similarity, *to* subsequently extended its meaning to conjunctive (e.g., *na to a* “you and me”), putative (e.g., *hito wo titi to agamu* “to look up to a person as father”), quotative (e.g., *ha to ihu* “to say ha”), adverbial (e.g., *harubaru to miyu* “to be seen distantly”), and so forth (Sansom 1928, Jidaibetsu Kokugo Daijiten 1967). The establishment of the quotative particle is thought to have been completed by the time of pre-Japanese.

Three instances of quotative *to* that appeared in literature of the Nara period are given below.⁸

- (12) a. *akadama no hikari ha ari to hito ha ihedo ...*
 light AP be QT people AP say-but
 ‘Although people say that there is a light, ...’ (Nihonshoki 6)
- b. *tukuhane ni ahamu to ihisi ko ha...*
 Mt. Tsukuha at sec-will QT say-PAST child AP
 ‘My child who said that it would see me in Mt. Tsukuha ...’ (Hitachi Fudoki 2)
- c. *ware nomi ya yohune ha kogu to omohereba...*
 I only Q night ship AP row QT think-when
 ‘When I thought that I was the only one rowing out at night, ...’ (Man’yooshuu 15. 3624)

In Nihonshoki songs and Fudoki songs, 22 instances of quotative *to* are found. The most frequent collocation is “to ihu” (to say that ...), followed by “to kiku” (to hear that ...), “to omohu” (to think that ...), “to toyomu” (to cry out that ...) , and “to mawosu” (I humbly say that ...). One instance of *to* found in Nihonshoki is not followed by such a verb. Observe below.

- (13) *omi no ko no yahe ya karakaki yuruse to ya miko*
 retainer GEN child GEN many hedge forgive QT Q prince

‘ “Forgive the servant’s child’s hedge,” Prince?’

(Nihonshoki 88)

In this sentence, the verb of saying is omitted as understood: “Are you saying that ..., Prince?” This is similar to the modern *tte* which is used in repeating what the other person has just said.⁹

Some instances of *to* found in the Joudai songs are different from those above in that they do not take a verb of saying/hearing/thinking.

(14) a. *sisi matu to wa ga imaseba sa wi matu to wa ga tataseba ...*

boar wait QT I GEN stay-when wolf wait QT I GEN stand-make-when

‘ “I will wait for wild boars,” I stayed and then “I will wait for wolves,” I stood, and then ...’

(Nihonshoki 75)

b. *yamato no osi no hirose wo wataramu to ayohi tatukuri kosi tukurahu mo*
big river cross-will QT shoestring make waist make but

‘ “I will cross the big river,” I made shoestrings and waiststraps, but ...’

(Nihonshoki 106)

The verbs “ihite” (saying that) or “omohite” (thinking that) seem to be omitted after *to*. This usage of *to* can be observed throughout Japanese literature. Observe the following excerpts taken from Nihon Eidaigura (1688), Bocchan (1906), and Fukugoo Osen (1975).

(15) a. *sue no yo no katariku ni nasu besi to miyako yori amata no banzyau wo manekite*

end GEN world GEN story into make should QT capitol from many GEN ACC invite and,

‘ “We should make it a big event.” They invited many carpenters from the capitol, and ...’

(Nihon Eidaigura I)

b. *dou suru ka miro to, sumasite kao wo aratte heya e kaette matte iru to,*

how do Q watch QT face ACC wash room to return wait be then

‘ “Look what I’m going to do.” He washed his face, returned his room, and waited, then ...’

(Bocchan)

c. *tyotto bakari hansamuna hisyo ga douzo to mukae ni kite kureta.*

a little only handsome secretary NOM please QT welcome come-kindly-PAST

‘A little bit handsome secretary, “Please,” kindly came to pick me up.’

(Fukugoo Osen)

As we have seen, *to* seems to have been established as a quotative particle since pre-Japanese. On the other hand, there existed another form of a quotative particle in Old Japanese. *Te*, instead of *to*, was used to mark quotation in a number of songs collected in Man’yooshuu. Such instances are found in Azuma Uta (vol. 14) and Sakimori Uta (vol.

20), songs made by Eastern people of the Nara period.

- (16) a. *wasuramu te no iki yama iki ware kuredo wa ga titi haha ha wasureseno kamo*
 forget-will QT field go mountain go I come-but I GEN father mother AP forget-NEG maybe
 ‘‘I will forget.’’ I came here through fields and mountains, but maybe my father
 and mother will not forget (me).’ (M 20. 4344)
- b. *titi haha ga kasira kakinade saku are te ihisi ketoha ze wasurekaneturu*
 father mother GEN head stroke happy be QT say-PAST word AP forget-PT-NEG
 ‘I can’t forget my father and mother’s saying, ‘‘Be happy,’’ stroking my head.’
 (M 20. 4346)

Te¹⁰ is thought to have been a dialectal form spoken in the Eastern Japan, a vast region to the east of Suruga, Shinano, and Tohotoumi (Mabuchi 1972, Nihon Kokugo Daijiten 1976).

In fact, the instance of quotative *te* is not limited to the rural songs recorded in Man’yooshuu. Surprisingly, it appears in the early Meiji literature. Observe the following excerpts that contain *te*.

- (17) a. *omae toko no tottuan mo ... mou ei no kai te kiku to ...*
 you place GEN father also already good NM Q te ask then
 ‘‘Is your father feeling better now?’’ I asked, and then ...’ (Meigo)
- b. *maa yabo wo iwazu tottokitamae te koto sa.*
 Well silly ACC say-NEG take te NM FP
 ‘I mean that you should take it without saying anything silly.’
 (Giketsu Kyooketsu)
- c. *‘sou kasiran.’ ‘sou kasiran te anmari da wa.’*
 So wonder So wonder te cruel COP FP
 ‘I wonder if that’s so.’ ‘‘I wonder if that’s so.’’ is cruel!’
 (Konjikiyasha)

Te in (17a) marks what one has heard, i.e., quotative marker. The uses of *te* found in (17b) and (17c), however, are not quotative markers. *Te* in (17b) form ‘‘N1 *te* N2’’ structure, and *te* in (17c) functions as a quotative marker as well as a topic introducer.

Note that *te*, which at first seems to have been extinct after Man’yooshuu (8th century), suddenly re-emerges with grammaticalized usage after 1000 years of absence. It is quite possible that *te* had survived in Eastern dialects and that it emerged to the surface again. In fact, the works above were written in the midst of a movement called ‘‘genbun icchi

undo” (unification of spoken and written language). Meiji writers attempted to write in their colloquial language instead of the classical language which was based on Old Japanese and Middle Japanese. It is then clear why *te* began to appear in literature again. The writers of the time adopted their own dialect for writing, which includes the Eastern dialectal variant for *to*, i.e., *te*.

In this section, I observed two basic functions of quotative *to* found in Old Japanese and the occurrences of quotative *te* in two separate eras of the Japanese history. Meiji *te* is identical in form with the ancient Eastern dialectal quotative *te*. I must avoid making a hasty conclusion that they are etymologically the same only by looking at the superficial similarity of the two. There is, however, a striking similarity between them. In the next section, I will discuss the function of *tote*, which traditional kokugogaku scholars claim to be the etymon of the modern *tte*.

3.1 TOTE

Traditionally, *tote* is thought to be made up of the quotative *to* + conjunctive particle *te* (Nihon Kokugo Daijiten 1976). This view assumes the ellipsis of a verb stem, “*ihi*” (to say) or “*omohi*,” (to think) between *to* and *te*, since conjunctive *te* cannot be directly attached to a case particle, in this case, *to*. *Tote* does not appear until the Heian literature, while *to* appears in as early as the Nara literature. From this fact, *tote* is assumed to be a later development than *to*. Interestingly, this evolution of *to* and *tote* is parallel with that of *ni* and *nite* in that “the zero-conjunction is historically earlier than the *te*-conjunction.” (Akiba-Reynolds 1984).

Tote has three major functions. First of all, *tote* indicates reason for an action, “thinking that ...” or “saying that ...”. The following instances are taken from Tosa Nikki (935), Tsurezuregusa (1331), and Sonezaki Shinjuu (1703).

- (18) a. *otoko mo sunaru nikki to iu mono wo onna mo site mimu tote suru nari*
 man also do-I-hear diary QT say thing ACC woman also do see tote do
 ‘Thinking, “A diary, which I hear men keep, a woman will try.” I will do it.’
 (Tosa Nikki 1)
- b. *nedono ni tobi wisaseji tote nawa wo hararetarikeru wo...*
 palace at kite be-CAUS-NEG tote rope ACC string
 ‘Thinking, “I will never let kites stay on the palace,” he stretched a rope around,

but ...' (Tsurezuregusa, 10)
c. natu no musu... someta moyou wo hana ka tote kata ni tomareba
 summer GEN insect ... dye-PAST print ACC flower Q tote shoulder at stop-when
 'A summer insect ... mistaking the dyed print for a flower, stopped on my
 shoulder, and ...' (Sonezaki Shinjuu, Kannon mawari)

Tte that appears in the following Modern Japanese literature may be a residue of this usage of *tote*, "thinking/saying that ...".

- (19)a. *soresore sono sinbokukai ga aru kara issyoni ikou tte ne, ohamasan ga susumekiru n sa.*
 such and such get-together NOM be since together go tte Ms. Ohama NOM suggest NM FP
 'Saying, "There is a get-together. Let's go," Ms. Ohama suggests me.
 (Ukigumo, 4)
- b. *tosisuke wa tuide ga aru kara tte, yurimoti no juubako to kama to wo motte*
 TP chance NM be since tte rice cake GEN box and sickle and ACC carry-and
ore wo kouhukuzi no ura made okutte kureta.
 me ACC GEN back to send-kindly-PAST
 'Toshisuke, saying "I am going to the same direction," carried a box of rice cake
 and a sickle, and kindly walked me to the behind of the Kofuku Temple. (Meigo)

The second function of *tote* is the indication of the opposite consequence, "even though."

- (20)a. *sari tote, hitasura tawaretaru kata ni wa arade onna ni tayasukarazu omowaren koso*
 so tote earnestly -PASS person TP be-NEG woman by easy-NEG think-PASS
aramahosikaru beki waza nare
 be-want should state COP
 'Even though it is so, I want to be a man who is liked but is not thought
 shallow by women.' (Tsurezuregusa, 3)
- b. *amata no sinruu ni syomuwake tote hasi katasi tirasazu, ...*
 many GEN relatives to distribution of momentos tote chopsticks a bit scatter-NEG
 'Even though mementoes were to be distributed to many relatives, even
 chopsticks were not given, ...' (Sonezaki Shinjuu)

This *tote*, "even though," seem to have survived in Modern Japanese in the form of *tte*. However, the conjugation is unique (See footnote 3).

- (21)a. *itekure to te wo awaseta tte iru mono ka.*
 stay-please QT hand ACC put-together-PAST tte stay never
 'Even if you beg me (lit. you put your hands together), I will never stay here.'

(Bocchan)

b. *antatati wa sinda tte ii no yo, kouhosya zya nai n da kara.*
 you-plural TP die-PAST tte good NM FP candidate COP-NEG NM COP because
 ‘Even if you die, I don’t care, because you are not candidates.’ (Fukugoo Osen)

The third function of *tote* is found in the “N1 *tote* N2” construction, which resembles the “N1 *tte* N2” (N2 called N1) construction .

- (22)a. *sinzyoutin no zyausin soudu tote yamugotonaki sirimono arikeri.*
 GEN priest tote noble intelligent man be-PAST
 ‘There was a noble intelligent man called “Priest Joshin from the Shinjo Temple.”’ (Tzurezuregusa, 60)
- b. *kyou ni gukakubou tote namamekitaru tonsei no sou wo koziuto narikereba*
 capitol at tote refined seclusion GEN priest but spouse’s sibling be-since
tuneni mousimutubikeri
 always get along-PAST
 ‘Refined secluded priest called Gukakubo in capitol was my wife’s brother, and so we were always good friends.’ (Tzurezuregusa, 87)
- c. *kuwaikottokoku tote ebisu no kowaki kuni ari*
tote savage GEN scary country exist
 ‘There was a scary uncivilized country called Kaikotsukoku.’ (Tsurezuregusa, 214)

Compared to *to* and its dialectal variant *te*, as seen in sections 2 and 3.1, *tote* does not seem to share much in common with *tte*. Tanba (1994), however, claims that “*tote* developed into *tte*,” citing two excerpts from Edo literature.

- (23)a. *swousin no binbou hima nashi. ... nandiyasi tada iru ma tote naku gobusata to koso katarikere.*
 true GEN poor free time not exist ... but just stay place tote non-existent-and long time OT te
 ‘A really poor person does not have even time to kill. ... But he does not even have a place to stay, and people say, “I haven’t seen him for a long time.”’
 (Gojuunenki utanenbutsu)
- b. *siwasu no hate ni kono gotoku. syokanzin syosyounin haru tote mo nai koto.*
 December GEN end on this like promoters merchants spring tote also non-existent NM
 ‘The end of December is like this. Promoters and merchants do not even have the New Year holiday.’ (Meido no hikyaku)

This scenario goes that *tote* was re-analysed as a topic introducer and that it underwent a sound reduction: *tote* > *tte*. This claim, however, fails to explain how the reanalysis of *tote* lead to the modern *tte*, since the function of *tote* above completely differs from that of the

modern *tte*. *Tote* in both (23a) and (23b) forms a structure, “X *tote nai*” (X *tote* non-existent), and it is interpreted as “Even X is lacking.” Observe the invented sentences below.

- (24)a. * *iru basyo tte nai.*
 stay place tte non-existent
 ‘(Since I am poor,) I have no place to stay.’
- b. * *osyoogatu tte nai.*
 New Year tte non-existent
 ‘(Since I am so busy), I have no New Year holiday.’

(24a) and (24b) are Modern Japanese equivalent for (23a-b). *Tte* in a neutral statement like (24) sounds very awkward.¹¹ As discussed in the previous section, a constraint holds when *tte* is used as a topic introducer: the predicate must contain the speaker’s evaluation/judgement (See (10a) and (10b)). *Tote* therefore does not seem to be the origin of *tte*, at least not of *tte* as a topic introducer.

3.2 (T)TE

While the earliest appearance of *te* is observed in ancient songs written in Eastern dialects, it does not make its appearance in literature until the Meiji period.¹² Two points should be made clear in discussing *te* that appears in the Meiji literature. First, it seems to be interchangeable with *tte*. In other words, there seems to be no rule that predicts the distribution of the two; The same author uses *te* in one place, *tte* in another. Observe the following *te* and *tte* used by Sachio Ito (25) and by Soseki Natsume (26).

- (25)a. *omae toko no tottuan mo ... mou ei no kai te kiku to.*
 you place GEN father also already good NM Q te ask then
 ‘“Is your father feeling better now?,” I asked. Then, ...’ (Meigo)
- b. *asita kouziduke wo takeru kara tte, okaasan ga sou iu kara, watasi tonde kimasita.*
 tomorrow pickles ACC make because tte mother NOM so say because I fly come-PAST
 ‘Since my mother said that she will make pickles tomorrow, I came here in a hurry.’ (Nogiku no haka)
- (26)a. “*akasyatu to yamaarashi taa, dotti ga ii hito desu ka ne.*” “*yamaarashi te nani zo na mosi.*”
 and which NOM good person CP Q FP te what
 ‘Which is a better guy, Akashatsu or Yama-arashi?’ ‘Yama-arashi? What is it?’
 (Bocchan)

- b. *ageteyaru te iu kara kotowarou to omou n desu.*
 raise te say because decline-will QT think NM CP
 ‘Since he says that he will raise (my salary if I transfer), I think I will decline
 (the offer).’ (Bocchan)

In the present Japanese, *te* and *tte* are in complementary distribution: *te* appears after [n], and *tte* appears elsewhere.

Second, in Meiji literature one can find instances of *te/tte* very similar to those in the present Japanese (cf. (1)-(5)).

(27) QUOTATION

- a. *otoko no kuchi kara mou kuchi mo kikanai nan zo tte itte okinagara...*
 man GEN mouth from more mouth even talk-NEG FP tte say-but
 ‘You, out of your own mouth, said that you will never talk, but ...’
 (Ukigumo, 15)
- b. *getsyukuryou no zyuui en ya zyuugo en wa kakemono wo hitohaba urya,*
 room-and-board fee GEN 10 yen 25 yen TP hanging picture ACC 1 piece sell-if
sugu uitekuru tte itteta ze.
 right away come up tte say-PAST FP
 ‘He said that you could pay for your room and board, 10 yen or 25 yen, if
 you sell a picture.’ (Bocchan)

(28) “N1 (T)TE N2”

- maa yabo wo iwazu tottoki tamae te koto sa.*
 Well silly ACC say-NEG take te NOM FP
 ‘Well, I mean, take it without saying anything silly.’ (Giketsu Kyooketsu)

(29) ASSERTION

- onna to iu mono wa sonna mono zya te.*
 woman QT say thing TP such thing FP te
 ‘A woman is like that, I’m telling you.’ (Konjikiyasha. chuuhen, 1)

No clear example of hearsay or topic marker (*tte*) was found in the Meiji literature I examined (Ukigumo, Bocchan, Konjikiyasha, Nogiku no haka, Meigo, and Giketsu Kyooketsu). However, transitional stages of hearsay *tte* and topic introducer *tte* were observed. The excerpts below show the former transition: from a quotative marker to a hearsay marker. The verb of saying “itta” (said) is omitted as understood from the context.

- (30) a. *watasi ga “oya sore zya otae wa oyome ni ikanai ki kae” to kaitara ne; “hai, watasi wa*
 I NOM oh that you TP bride to go-NEG will QT ask-then FP yes I TP

kiippon de toosimasu” *tte*... *maa akirekaeru zyaa nai ka nee bunsan.*
 single-minded keep *tte* well dumfounded COP NEG Q FP Mr. Bun
 ‘“So, you are not going to marry,” I asked her, then “No, I will remain single all
 my life,” (she said). Well, aren’t you dumbfounded, Mr. Bun? (Ukigumo, 4)
 b. *musume to mo tune hudan sou itte masu koto sa, anou honda san wa ... zyou sai ga*
 daughter with also always so say NOM FP well Mr. Honda TP tactful
nakute osezi ga yokutte otokoburi mo ii keredomo, tada monokui no warui no ga
 cor-apliment NOM good-and manliness also good but free eating NM bad NM NOM
attara tama ni kizu da tte, ohohohoho.
 exist-if gem at damage *tte* ha ha
 ‘My daughter and I always say so. Well, “Mr. Honda ... is tactful, soft-spoken,
 good-looking, but if he is a womanizer, that will be a tiny flaw in a gem.” (we
 say). Ha ha.’ (Ukigumo, 6)

I assume that the omission of “*itta*”(said) gave rise to the hearsay marker, *tte*. Compare (30a-b) with the sentence below taken from “Fukugo Osen,” written in 1975, that contains a full-fledged hearsay marker, “Nominalizer + *da* + *tte*”.

(31) *mikan ni wakkusu kakete utteru n da tte.*
 orange on wax spray-and sell NOM CP *tte*
 ‘I hear that they wax oranges and sell them.’ (Fukugo Osen)

Similarly, *tte* in (32) shows the transition from direct quotation to a topic introducer.

(32)a. “*sou kasiran.*” “*sou kasiran te anmari da wa.*”
 So wonder So wonder *te* cruel COP FP
 ‘I wonder if that’s so.’ “‘I wonder if that’s so.’ is cruel!’ (Konjikiyasha)
 b. “*nabe no osiroi wo tuketa toko wa marude tadon e simo ga futta you de gozaimasu*”
 maid GEN powder ACC apply NOM TP as-if charcoal at frost NOM fall-PAST like COP
tte anmari jaa arimasen ka.
tte cruel COP-NEG Q
 ‘The maid’s wearing make-up looks like a charcoal covered with frost.’ is cruel.
 isn’t it?’ (Ukigumo, 1)
 c. “*akasyatu to yamaarasi taa, dotti ga ii hito desu ka ne.*”
 and and TP which NOM good person COP Q FP
 ‘Which is a better person, Akashatsu or Yamaarashi?’
 “*yamaarasi te nan zo na mosi.*”
te what
 ‘What’s “Yamaarashi”?’ (Bocchan)
 d. *anata to ki no awanai mono wa minna harenti to kimatte mo inai kara...*
 you and feeling GEN match-NEG person TP all impudent QT decide-NEG since
sore wo muyamini barisite... sonna sikkeina koto tte...

it ACC excessively accuse-and such rude thing tte
 ‘A person who has different opinion with you is not necessarily impudent, but you accused him excessively.... Such a rude thing is’ (Ukigumo, 12)

In (32 a-c), (*t*)*te* marks direct quotation. In (32d), however, *tte* does not mark direct quotation but an NP, “sonna sikkei na koto” (such a rude thing). From the context, it is assumed that a predicate such as “anmari da wa” (is cruel) is omitted. Then, the utterance (33) would be evidence for *tte* as a topic introducer.

(33) *sonna sikkei na koto tte anmari da wa.*
 such rude thing tte cruel CP FP
 ‘Such a rude thing is cruel.’

Compare (33) with the sentence below which has a full-fledged topic introducer.

(34) (A farmer and a woman are talking on the plane back to Japan from Paris.)
tanosikatta kedomo yo, nani mitemo wakaranee si, setumei kiitemo
 fun-PAST but FP what look-though understand-NEG explanation listen-though
omosirokane. soredemo yooroppa nante, ore no mura zya syooya demo itta
 interesting-NEG but Europe I GEN village at TP villagehead even go-PAST
koto ga nee da kara, kaereba ii omoide ni naru n daroo nee. ...
 NM NOM non-existent COP therefore return-if good memory become NM probably FP
 ‘It was fun, but I didn’t understand anything I saw, and it was boring to listen to explanation. But, probably it will be a good memory when I return to my village, because no one, even no village headman, has ever been to Europe.’ ...
taisita mono desu yo nee. ohyakusyousan tte taihenna keiki desu ne.
 much thing COP FP FP farmers tte extreme economy COP FP
 ‘That’s really something, isn’t it? Farmers are doing quite a good business, aren’t they?’ (Fukugoo Osen)

In (34), B abruptly brings a topic, “ohyakusyousan” (farmers) into the conversation which has not previously appeared in discourse. Notice that both (33) and (34) contain the speaker’s subjective feeling in the predicate.⁴³

4. Conclusion

I have shown the similarity of *to* and *tte* in meaning and in function. In spite of some scholars’ claim that *tte* was derived from *tote*, the two do not have as much in common as *to* and *tte* do. Furthermore, Tanba’s reanalysis hypothesis fails to explain how a topic

introducer *tte* was derived from *tote*.

An identical form *te* appears as a quotative marker in the literature of two separate times: the Nara period and the Meiji period. The former instance is limited to quotation marking, while the latter instance shows various grammaticalized functions. Although the process is not traceable in written texts, it is likely that *te* has undergone grammaticalization after being used by Eastern people for more than a thousand of years. *Te* appears again along with *tte* in the early Meiji, when “genbun icchi” was advocated. It is not a coincidence that these two events happened at the same time. The use of spoken language in texts made it possible to bring dialectal *te* to the surface again. Writers at the time began to write in their Eastern dialect. I should note that two of the five authors I quoted for Meiji literature excerpts were strong advocates of “genbun icchi undou”: Koyo Ozaki and Shimei Futabatei, both Tokyoites. In their attempt to unify spoken and written languages, they used colloquial forms, *te* and *tte*, in transcribing casual dialogues instead of the standard *to*. It is possible that their attempt lead to the spread of *te* throughout Modern Japanese.

Abbreviations

ACC:	Accusative particle	NM:	Nominalizer
AP:	Adverbial particle and <i>kakari joshi</i>	NOM:	Nominative particle
COP:	Copula	Q:	Question particle
FP:	sentence Final particle	QT:	Quotative particle
GEN:	Genetive particle	TP:	Topic marker

References

- Akiba-Reynolds, Katsue. 1984. “Internal reconstruction in pre-Japanese syntax,” in Fisiak, Jaeck (ed.) *Historical Syntax*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Alfonso, Anthony. 1966. *Japanese Language Patterns vol. 1 and 2*. Tokyo: Center for Japanese Studies of Sophia University.
- Aoki, Haruo. 1986. “Evidentials in Japanese.” In Chafe, W. and Nichols, J. (eds). *Evidentiality: The Linguistic Coding of Epistemology*. 223-228. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- Aoki, Keiko. 1998. “The function of *tte* in the colloquial Japanese discourse and its subjectivity,” *Journal of the Society of Liberal Arts*, No. 65.
- Endo-Simon, Mutsuko. 1984. *Supplementary Grammar Notes to An Introduction to Modern Japanese*. Ann Arbor, MI: Centre for Japanese Studies, University of

Michigan.

- Fujita, Yasuyuki. 1991. "In'yoo no kaitai [Breaking up of quotation]." *Nihongogaku ronsetsu shiryoo* 28-3 joo. pp. 1-7. Tokyo: ronsetsu shiryoo hozonkai.
- Hayashi, Makoto. 1997. "An exploration of sentence-final uses of the quotative particle in Japanese spoken discourse." 6th JK Conference, Los Angeles, CA.
- Hopper, Paul & Elizabeth Closs Traugott. 1993. *Grammaticalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mabuchi, Kazuo. 1972. *Joodai no kotoba* [Ancient Language], chapter 5. Tokyo: Shibundo.
- Makino, Seiichi & Michio Tsutsui. 1986. *A Dictionary of Basic Japanese Grammar*. Tokyo: The Japan Times.
- Martin, Samuel. 1975. *A Reference Grammar of Japanese*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- _____. 1987. *The Japanese Language Through Time*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Maynard, Senko. 1990. *An Introduction to Japanese Grammar and Communication Strategies*. Tokyo: The Japan Times.
- Miura, Akira. 1974. "to to tte [to and tte]." *Nihongo kyouiku* 24. pp. 23-28.
- Mori, Junko. 1996. "Historical Change of the Japanese Connective *Datte*: Its Form and Functions." *Japanese/Korean Linguistics*, vol. 5. Stanford: CSLI
- Nihon kokugo daijiten* [The Dictionary of the Japanese Language]. 1976. Tokyo: Shogakukan.
- Sansom, G.B., C.M.G. 1995. *An Historical Grammar of Japanese*. Surrey: Curzon Press.
- Syromiatnikov, N.A. 1981. *The Ancient Japanese Language*. Moscow: Nauka Publishing House.
- Tanba, Tetsuya. 1994. Shudai teiji no "tte" to in'yoo [topic marker *tte* and quotation]. *Nihongogaku ronsetsu shiryoo* 31-3. Tokyo: ronsetsu shiryoo hozonkai. pp. 417-432.
- Traugott, Elizabeth. 1989. "On the rise of epistemic meanings in English: An example of subjectification in semantic change." *Language* 65:1. pp. 31-55.
- Yamada, Yoshio. 1952. *Heianchoo Bunpooshi* [History of grammar in the Heian period]. Tokyo: Hoobunkan.

References for sources

- Akiyama, Kei, et al eds. 1971-73. *Nihon koten bungaku zenshu* [The complete works of classical Japanese literature]. Tokyo: Shogakukan.
- Ariyoshi, Sawako. 1975. *Fukugoo Osen* [Complex Contamination]. Tokyo: Shinchosha.
- Ito, Sachio. 1965. *Ito Sachio Meisakushu 1*. [The masterpiece of Sachio Ito vol. 1]. Tokyo: Shinbungaku shobo.
- Natsume, Soseki. 1968. *Natsume Sooseki Zenshuu 2*. [The complete works of Soseki Natsume vol. 2]. Tokyo: Chikuma shoboo.
- Takagi, Ichinosuke, et al eds. 1959-61. *Nihon koten bungaku taikai* [The complete works of classical Japanese literature]. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten.
- Tanizaki, Jun'ichiro, et al eds. 1969-70. *Nihon no bungaku* [Literature of Japanese]. Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha.

Notes

¹ I use the term “topic introducer” for *tte* instead of the term “topic marker,” since *tte* is different from a topic marker *wa* in several ways. See Makino and Tsutsui (1986) for detail.

² These samples are taken from six discourse samples I collected in 1996. The twelve participants (6 women and 6 men) are all native speakers of Japanese, including Tokyo and Kansai dialect speakers and are of ages in their 20’s to their 40’s.

³ The conjugation is anomalous. Verb perfective tense + *tte*; Adjective stem + *ku* + *ta* + *tte*; Noun + copula + *tte*.

⁴ This sentence-final *to* as a hearsay marker is attested in some dialects (Martin 1975) and in speech for rhetoric effect, “distance.” (Hayashi 1997)

⁵ While “ganguro te wa nan desu ka.” is grammatical, “ganguro tte wa nan desu ka.” is totally unacceptable, possibly due to redundancy of a topic introducer *tte* and a topic marker “*wa*”.

⁶ “... a pragmatic-semantic process whereby meanings become increasingly based in the speaker’s subjective belief/attitude toward the proposition.” (Traugott 1989).

⁷ According to *Nihon Kokugo Daijiten*, Aston, Kobayashi, Kami, and Hashimoto also agree with this hypothesis. Syromiatnikov (1981) opposes this hypothesis of Sansom’s, and yet he does not give an alternative.

⁸ The Chinese characters used to transcribe the quotative marker in Old Japanese all belong to the group B: 登, 苔, 等, 騰, etc.

⁹ It is called “echo question.”

Ex.) A: *watashi yameru*. I’m going to quit.

B: *yameru tte?* “Quit?”

¹⁰ *Te* is transcribed as ㊦ in these songs.

¹¹ If the copula “*da*” is inserted between noun and *tte*, it becomes grammatical. (Noun + copula + *tte*: “even (though)”)

(24’) a. *iru basyo da tte nai*. ‘I don’t even have a place to stay.’

b. *osyougatu da tte nai*. ‘I don’t even have the New Year holiday.’

¹² I found a number of instances of quotative *te* appeared in Edo literature, part of which were written in the colloquial speech of the time, Edo (Tokyo) dialect. Look at the following excerpts from Ukiyoburo (1809-13).

1) *nan te (itte) hometa*. (Ukiyoburo, zenpen kan no joo)

what te say-and praise-PAST

‘What did they say to praise you?’

2) *mono kane wo kosehebei te (itte)*, (ibid)

money ACC prepare-let’s te say-and

‘(He said.) “Let’s prepare money,” and ...’

¹³ Why *te* has become *tte* may be explained by Makino & Tsutsui’s observation for double consonants in Japanese: “the glottal stop (= double consonants) is often used to create more emphatic and/or more emotive versions of a given sound as in *pitari* vs. *pittari* ‘tightly,’ *yahari* vs. *yappari* ‘as expected.’” (1986, p. 56)