

Abstract 05

A Comparison of Particle “Ne” in Japanese and Sinhalese

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Sinhalese students learning Japanese as a foreign language make many errors in particle usage, especially in the usage of particle “Ne” in their speech. Japanese language final particle “Ne” and Sinhalese sentence particle “Ne” is used in the same meaning, when the speaker assumes that he/she and the addressee have same status regarding the knowledge or belief about the piece of information being conveyed. Nevertheless there are other usages of “Ne” in both languages. For an example “Ne” is used to confirm something in Sinhalese: “Yamada mahata NE?”. However, when we translate it into Japanese it becomes “Yamada san desu KA?” Not “NE”. Therefore, students tend to use mix up Sinhalese “Ne” with Japanese “Ne” particle in their speech. Thus this study aims to identify different usages of Japanese “Ne” and Sinhalese “Ne”, what type of errors students make in using “Ne” in their Japanese speech and why they are making these errors. For this study, a group of Japanese learning students in the University of Kelaniya was selected and they were categorised according to the levels of their Japanese Language proficiency test results. All were given a particular dialogue to be made in concerned with the particle “Ne”. Their speeches were recorded and the data was analysed. The findings highlights that, overgeneralisation of Sinhalese “Ne” in Japanese context is the main cause for the errors made by students. In conclusion this research will help the students to identify the correct usage of “Ne” and will also be a guideline to conduct further research on oral communication.

Key words: “Ne” particle in Japanese, “Ne” particle in Sinhalese, oral communication, overgeneralisation, speech