■ *Nanka* and *Nante*: Focus of Low Rating

Nanka and *nante* express that the speaker considers what is in focus is of low value and is out of the range of consideration.

(1*) Nattō {nanka/nante} taberarenai yo* 'I can't eat (something like) natto.'

(2*) Nattō {nanka/nante} dokodemo kaemasu yo* 'You can buy natto just about anywhere.'

(3*) Nattō ni {nanka/nante} mayoneezu wa kakenai yo* 'I don't put mayonnaise over natto.'

In (1) through (3), the speaker describes "*nattō*" as something of low rating, and paradigmatically implies things that are of higher rating (e.g., fried lobster, steamed scallops), that is, the speaker would consider something else worth scrutinizing, but *natto* is so low rating that it is easy to give a [low] evaluation without scrutiny. *Nanka* may change to *nado* in formal style.

Nanka and *nante* are almost always interchangeable semantically, except in the following three usages.

(a) *Nante* cannot precede a case particle.

(4) *Otōto {nanka/*nante} ni makenai zo* 'I am not going to be beaten by my mere young brother.

(5) *Watashi {nanka/*nante} ga tsukuru sakuhin wa zenkokutaikai de wa nyūsenshinai darō* 'A production prepared by someone like me wouldn't win in the national contest.'

(b) *Nante* cannot split a 用言 *yōgen* inside a clause when the entire clause is the focus.

(6) *Yasui kudamono {nanka/*nante} dato, amami ga tarinai n desu yo* 'There is not enough sweetness in, say, cheap fruit.'

(7) *Kōkōsei ga gakkō nimo ikazu Shibuya de jōhō kōkan shitari {nanka/?nante} shite iru n desu yo* 'High school students exchange information in Shibuya instead of going to school.'

(c) When *nante* contains [*nado* + *to*-quotational clause], it is not interchangeable with *nanka*.

(8) *Watashi o mama {*nanka/nante(=nado to)} yobanaide* 'Don't ever call me Mama.'

(9) *Ikitakunai {?nanka/nante(=nado to)} omotte imasen* 'I am not at all thinking I don't want to go.'

(10) *Minna de jugyō o saborō {*nanka/nante (=nado to iu)} koto ni natta n da* 'Somehow we ended up deciding to ditch class together.'

(11) *Paatii ni raamen {*nanka/nante (=nado to iu)} tabenikui ryōri wa dasanaide kudasai* 'Don't serve such a hard-to-eat dish like ramen, of all things, at the party.'

(12) *Jitensha ni norenai {*nanka/nante (=nado to wa)} shiranakatta naa* 'I didn't know you couldn't ride a bicycle, of all things.'

In summary, *nante* is used in two ways: It is used with *to* that leads a quotational clause, as in (c), or it is used without it.

→とりたて Focus (2-I), ナンカとクライ－低評価のとりたて *Nanka* and *Kurai*: Focus of Low Rating(2-I)

● References

Numata, Yoshiko & Noda Hisashi ed., *Nihongo no toritate – gendaigo to rekishiteki henka, chiriteki ihen* (Focus in Japanese – Contemporary Japanese and Historical Change & Geographical Change). Kurosio Publishers.

Numata, Yoshiko (2000) 'Toritate' (Focus) in Kinsui, Satoshi et al., *Nihongo n bunpō 2 toki, hitei to toritate* (Japanese Grammar 2: Time, Negation and Focus). Iwanami Shoten.

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