

## A Constructional Approach to the Historical Development of Conditional Imperatives in Japanese

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Recent cognitive linguistic studies of the conditional imperative (henceforth, CI), exemplified in (1) for English, argue for a Construction Grammar analysis, in which the CI is subsumed by two parent constructions: directive imperative and *and*-conditional (cf. Fortuin & Boogaart, 2009).

- (1) Break the vase and I will break your neck.

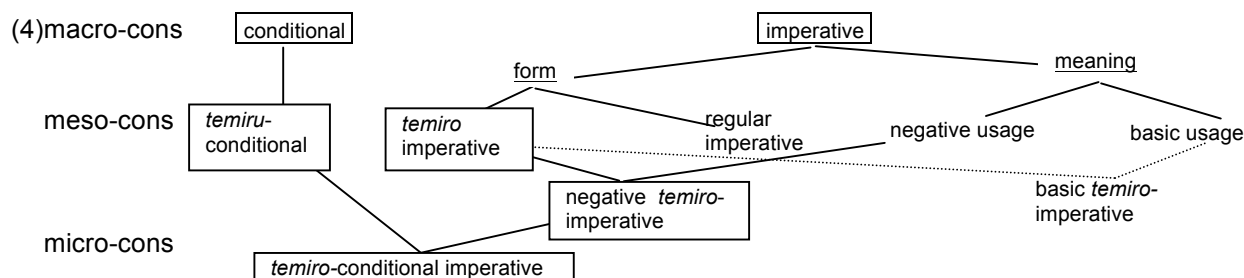
The double-inheritance analysis offers a straightforward account of the duality of the construction, and its synchronic validity appears sufficiently demonstrated. However, little has been known about the historical aspects of CIs, much less whether and how the constructional analysis can accommodate the diachronic data. This paper aims to show that the constructional analysis adequately explains the development of the CI construction in Japanese. In particular, it will explore how a new construction emerges from the accumulation of particular language use, and how the construction network can also give rise to a further construction change.

Japanese CIs, illustrated in (2), are different from those in English, and have properties (3a-d):

- (2) a. (Mosi) sore -o yonde-miro. Omae -towa zekkouda.  
(If) that ACC read-try-imperative you -with part-with  
'Read that, and I'm done with you.'  
b. (Mosi) sore -ga mitukatte-miro. Wareware -wa osimai-dazo.  
(If) that NOM be-found-try-imperative we TOP finish  
'(Imagine) that is found, and we are finished.'
- (3) a. Two sentences are simply juxtaposed without any conjunction (*and* or *or*).  
b. It allows only the imperatives of the form V-*temiro*, i.e., complex predicate meaning 'try to-V'.  
c. A conditional marker such as *mosi* ('if') can occur in the imperative sentence.  
d. Two types can be identified: (A) the warning-type (=2a)) and (B) the hypothesis-type (=2b)). Type A resembles the CI found in English and other languages. Type B is unique in that the subject need not be the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, and it may even denote a non-volitional event.

However, previous studies have been unable to account for how this construction came to be established.

Through a thorough examination of the historical data, this paper claims that the construction network and constructional inheritance are crucially involved in the process. It will be demonstrated that the emergence of Type A was gradually prepared by the conventionalization of a specific usage of the *temiro* imperative through 18C, until the imperative was reanalyzed as a subtype of the conditional. Once this constructionalization was completed, the network structure (cf. (4)) was now ready to give rise to Type B (early 19C); the emergence of Type B, it will be argued, reflected an independent change in the usage of the *temiru* conditional, one of its parents, which was then inherited by the daughter construction.



Thus the development of the Japanese CI can be best explained by referring to the construction network. More generally, this paper suggests that the speaker's knowledge of language as a system is as important for a diachronic change as the context-based language use (cf. Fisher 2010).

### References

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