

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

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# 0. Introduction

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► Goal :

- (1) Empirical: To demonstrate with diachronic data how the Japanese *Temiru* conditional imperative (TCI, for short) has developed into its present form.
  
- (2) Theoretical: To show that the construction grammar provides an effective framework to explain the diachronic change.

# Claims

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- ▶ TCI has two types, and each one developed through very different types of language change.
- ▶ The first type emerged in early 18C through usage-based reanalysis, and constituted a new construction.
- ▶ The second type emerged in early 19C through construction-based analogy.
- ▶ Bottom-up and top-down.

# Road map

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1. A Brief description of conditional imperatives
2. The Japanese TCI and the issues in its development
3. Proposal:
  - Proposed construction network
  - Proposed scenarios of development
4. Conclusion

# 1: Conditional imperatives:

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- ▶ Form: imperative / Meaning: conditional

(I) Eat this, and you'll be in trouble!

- ▶ If you eat this, you'll be in trouble.
- ▶ Don't eat this! (Otherwise, you'll be in trouble.)  
undesirable consequence → warning/prohibition

- ▶ *And-Conditional Imperatives*

Stefanowitsch (2003), Dancygier & Sweetser (2005),  
Fortuin & Boogaart (2009), Takahashi (2012)

- ▶ Construction grammar analysis: double inheritance

## 2. Japanese *Temiru*-conditional imperatives (TCI)

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- (2)      Sore-o yonde-miro,      omae –towa zekko-da.  
          that acc read-try(imp), you      with break off  
          ‘Read that, (and) I’m done with you!’      (Shinzato 2002)

### Common with the English conditional imperative

- ▶ The discrepancy of form and meaning  
    warning, prohibition

### Peculiar to the TCI

- ▶ The use of –*temiru* ‘try’ (< *miru* ‘see’) complex predicate.
- ▶ No conjunction; bare juxtaposition or parataxis
- ▶ A conditional marker (e.g., *mosi* ‘if’) can occur in the imperative sentence.

## The occurrence of conditional marker *mosi*

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(2) Sore-o yonde-miro, omae –towa zekko-da.

that acc read-try (imp), you with

‘Read that, (and) I’m done with you!’

(Shinzato 2002)

(3) **Mosi** sore-o yonde-miro, omae –towa zekko-da.

**if** that acc read-try(imp), you with

‘Read that, (and) I’m done with you!’

(Shinzato 2002)

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(4) Try hard! You'll make it.

→ If you try hard, you will make it.

(5) Isshokenmei ganbat-temiro. Dekiru-yo.

hard                      try-imp-try      make-it

‘Try hard. You will make it.’

(6) \***Mosi** Isshokenmei ganbat-temiro. Dekiru-yo.

**if**      hard                      try-imp-try      make-it

‘Try hard. You will make it.’



# Two types of TCI

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- ▶ (i) warning type
- ▶ (ii) supposition type

(7) Zisin        –demo okotte-miro,        doo suru-nda!  
earthquake like happen-try(imp), what do Q  
‘(Lit.) (Let) the earthquake happen. What will you do?’  
‘=If the earthquake ever happens, what will you do?’

(8) Mosi zisin        –demo okotte-miro,        doo suru-nda!  
If earthquake like happen-try(imp), what do Q  
‘(Lit.) (Let) the earthquake happen. What will you do?’

## Supposition type TCI (vs. warning type)

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- ▶ (Implicit) subject can be non-2<sup>nd</sup> person; inanimate thing.
- ▶ The predicate can denote a non-volitional process or state.
- ▶ *Te-miru* has lost its lexical meaning 'to try.'
- ▶ Unavailable as an independent imperative sentence (i.e., unless it is meant as a condition with some consequence implied.)

(9) \*Zisin      –demo okotte-miro.  
earthquake like happen-try(imp)  
'(Lit.) (Let) the earthquake happen.'

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- ▶ No meaning of prohibition; the supposed event and the consequence can be desirable. (cf. (10))

(10) (Mosi) Kono takarakuzi –ga atatte-miro,  
if this lottery nom win-try,  
sugoi gotei -o tatete-miseru.  
huge mansion acc build-show  
'(Lit.) (Let) this be a winning ticket. I'll build a grand  
mansion!' (Nagano 1996: modified)

# Issues of the Japanese conditional imperative construction

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- ▶ 1. Why can the conditional marker appear in the imperative clause?
- ▶ 2. How is the supposition type possible at all? (Why can it take the imperative form, while it fails to meet the fundamental conditions of the imperative?)
- ▶ 3. What is the relationship between the warning type and the supposition type?

# Previous studies

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## Shinzato (2002)

- ▶ Neo-Gricean analysis:
- ▶ Imperatives which cannot be interpreted as direction → conditional (warning) interpretation
- ▶ “Started probably after 17C”  
(but provided data only from 19C (=supposition type))

## Mori (2006)

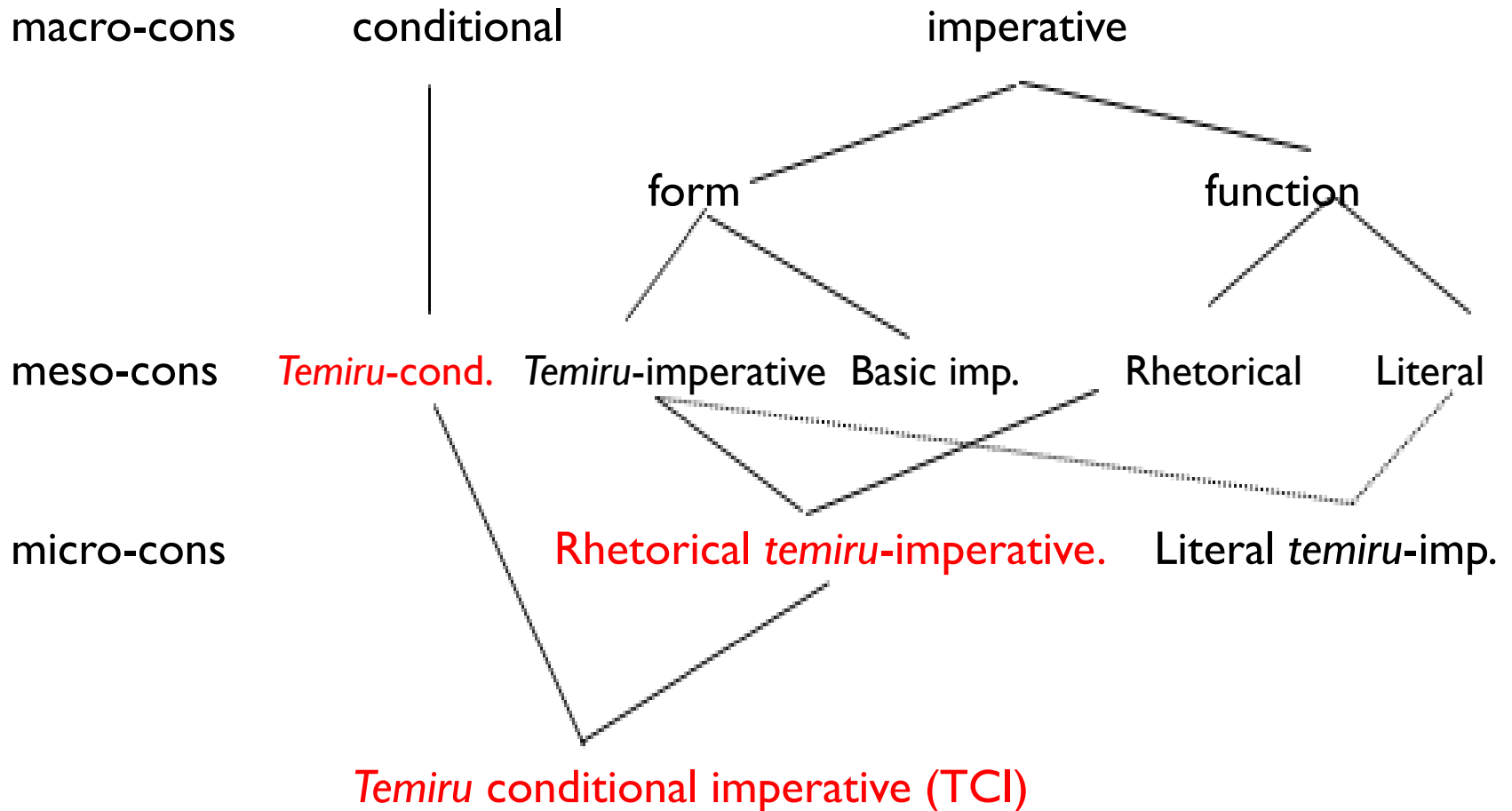
- ▶ Follows Shinzato's (2002) historical data.
- ▶ For TCI, the imperative can have a conditional meaning because it is a construction. (?)

### 3. Proposal

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The answer to the questions lies in the construction network, and how the construction emerged and developed.

# Proposed construction network



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- ▶ The occurrence of the conditional marker *mosi*:
  - ▶ TCI is an independent construction which is a subtype of both imperative and conditional constructions.
  - ▶ The double inheritance ensures the occurrence of *mosi*, (not simply the availability of the conditional interpretation.)



# Proposed scenario

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- ▶ 1<sup>st</sup> Step: constructionalization

temiru imperative → temiru conditional imperative  
(warning type)

- ▶ 2<sup>nd</sup> Step: construction expansion

conditional imperative (warning type) →  
conditional imperative (warning + supposition)

# Proposed scenario

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- ▶ 1<sup>st</sup> Step: constructionalization

temiru imperative → temiru conditional imperative

Syntagmatic relation provided the crucial context; A formulaic expression triggered rechunking (reanalysis)

- ▶ 2<sup>nd</sup> Step: construction expansion

conditional imperative (warning type) →

conditional imperative (warning + supposition)

Construction network = knowledge of language as a system induced the expansion:

# Step 1: constructionalization

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## Emergence of the TCI.

- ▶ Rhetorical (negative) imperatives were reanalyzed as a protasis of a conditional sentence.

[The conditional interpretation (generally available as inference, when a clause of prediction follows) was pragmatically strengthened to such an extent that it became the meaning of the construction.]

How?

When? (Empirical evidence?)

## Idiomatic expressions (Early 18C and after)

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(11) Ma-itido yubi-o saite-miyo. Ude-hone kitte, kiri-sagen.  
once more finger-acc point-try-imp arm-bone chop chop  
‘Point your finger once again, I’ll chop your arm and crash  
the bone.’ (Yomei Tenno Syokunin Kagami (1704))

(12) Ma-hito-koto iute-miyo. Atama-o hari-kudaite-noken.  
one word say-try-imp. head acc slap-crash-do  
‘Say that again, I’ll crash your head!’  
(Ukiyo Oyazi Katagi (1720))

# Constructionalization

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- ▶ An imperative sentence and a subsequent prediction sentence (which were linked by a pragmatic inference of conditional relation) were **rechunked** (**reanalyzed**) as ONE conditional sentence, with the imperative functioning as the protasis.
  
- ▶ Crucial points:
  - (1) Rhetorical imperatives: no literal interpretation available.
  - (2) Typically two sentences occur together, and the semantic structure of the parataxis coincides with that of a conditional sentence.
  
- ▶ First attested data of the warning type TCI.

## Step 2: construction expansion

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## First attested data of the supposition type

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Early 19C; *Ukiyoburo* (1809-1813):

(13) Ottsuke Edo –no mizu –ga simite-mina,  
eventually Edo gen water nom penerate-try-imp,  
tanon-demo utai-wa simee.

ask-if will not sing.

‘(Lit.) (Let) the water (life) in Edo eventually come to fit her.

She will not sing if she is asked to.’

(14) Ottsuke kokodomo –demo dekite-mina, aa-wa ikanee.  
Eventually child be born-try-imp that not go

‘(Lit.) (Let) a baby be born. Things will not go that way.’

# Problems in the construction expansion

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- ▶ Statives in conditional imperatives

(15) Know the answer and you will get an A. (Lakoff, 1966)

- ▶ Japanese TCl: warning type vs. supposition type

[1] polarity reversal

- ▶ Warning type: Don't do X.
- ▶ Supposition type: Imagine X.

[2] supposition type allows the third person inanimate subject.

[3] *te-miru* 'to try' compatible with volitional action only

- ▶ No diachronic data suggesting the gradual change.



# What happened in the late 18C??

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- ▶ A new usage of *te-miru* conditional (Kikuta 2011)
- ▶ Non-volitional *te-miru* conditional:  
*Te-miru* = ‘to try’ → volitionality constraint.
- ▶ In this usage  
The lexical meaning of ‘trying’ is almost unavailable.  
The volitionality constraint is lifted;  
a non-volitional process/state can appear.

## Non-volitional *te-miru* conditional

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(16) Hutto omohituihite-mireba, sekkyo -hodo imaimasihi  
think of-try-cond. preaching as annoying  
mono -wa naiga  
thing top not-exist  
'If I come to think of it, nothing is as annoying as  
preaching.' (*Shikatahanasi* 1772)

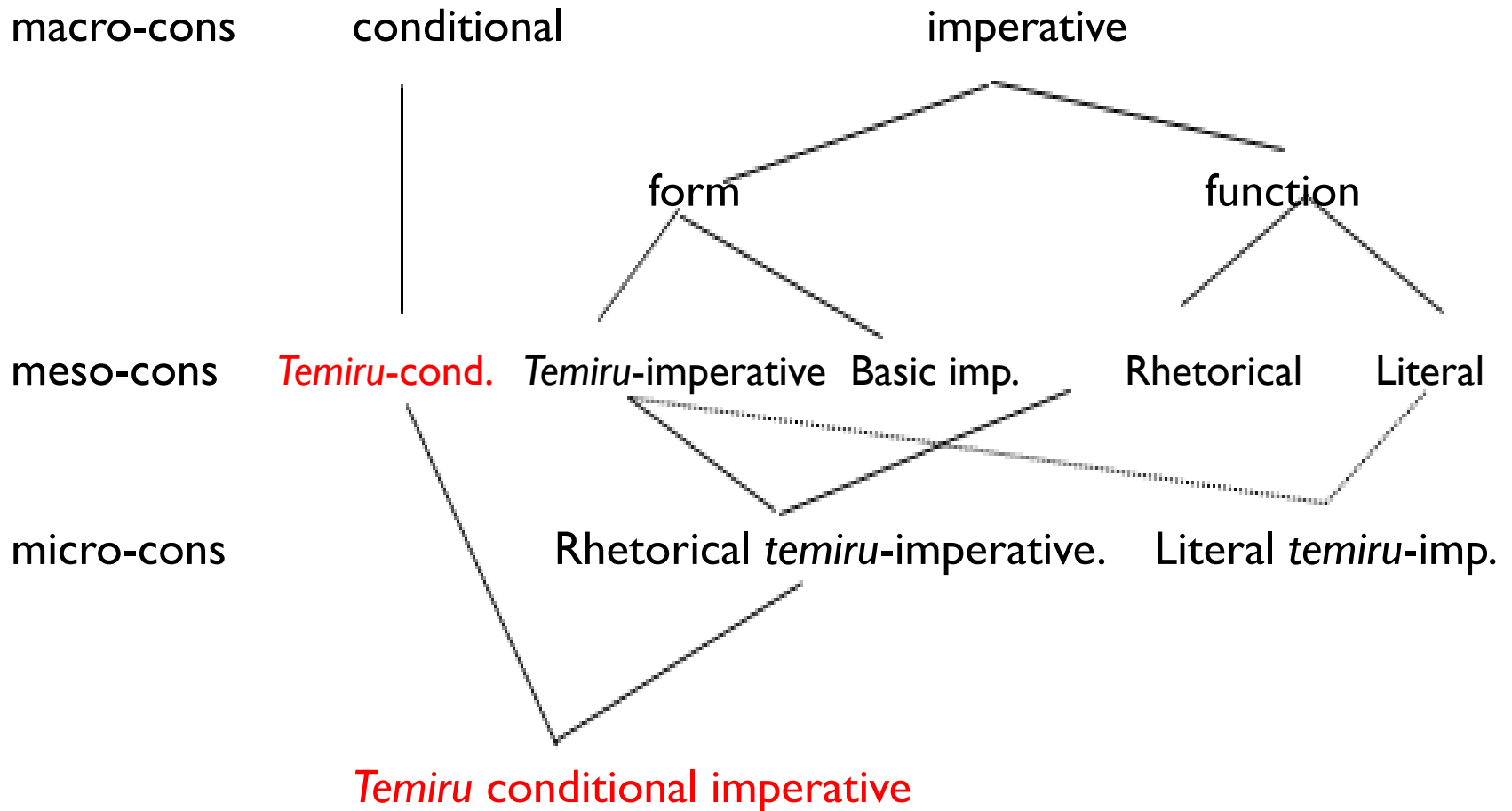
(17) Koo natte-mireba hubin-dayo.  
this way become-try-cond. Sorry.  
'If things become this way, I feel sorry.'  
(*Tsugen sougamagki* 1787)

# Non-volitional *temiru*-conditional as the source of the supposition-type TCI

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- ▶ Only in these two usages of *temiru*-complex predicate
  - ▶ *Temiru* has lost the original sense of ‘trying
  - ▶ The volitionality constraint is not operative.
- ▶ The supposition type TCI was born by inheriting the new usage in the *temiru*-conditional, one of its parents.

# Proposed construction network



# Conclusion

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- ▶ Warning type emerged in early 18C.
- ▶ Supposition type emerged in early 19C.

Two different types of language change are involved.

- ▶ Constructionalization or the emergence of the warning type was motivated by the situated language use and syntagmatic rechunking: bottom-up.
- ▶ The emergence of the supposition type directly reflected an independent change in the parent (meso-) construction; thus the construction expansion was supported by the configuration of the construction network: top-down.

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