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# The perfective imperative in Japanese

## A further analysis

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## ABSTRACT

The present thesis is concerned with a descriptive analysis of a phenomenon in the Japanese language, the use as an imperative of two suffixes of tense and aspect, *-ta* and *-tari*. The use of the past tense form (or *ta*-form) as an imperative in modern Japanese has been touched upon by various scholars, but a detailed account of the construction, its diachrony, and its place in a cross-linguistic context has not previously been performed. These aspects of the constructions are described in detail, and a contrastive analysis determines how imperative *-ta* differs from other imperatives in modern Japanese. The relation between aspect and imperative utterances manifested in imperative *-ta* is discussed, focusing on the connection between imperative *-ta* and perfective aspect. The discussion also focuses on the occurrence of past tense and perfective imperatives cross-linguistically. These phenomena are connected through the concept of deictic projection (Lyons 1977, Tavangar and Amouzadeh 2006).

**Keywords:** Aspect, deictic projection, imperative, Japanese, past tense, perfective aspect, *-ta*, *-tari*

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## CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

### Glossing

The system used in this paper for glossing vocabulary essentially corresponds to the Leipzig Glossing Rules. A list of abbreviations is given below.

### Romanization

The modified Hepburn system of romanization has been used for transcribing Japanese vocabulary. It differs from the original system in some aspects; for instance, double letters, not macrons, mark long vowels, except long *e*, which is written *ei*. Words of Japanese origin now considered part of the English lexicon, such as place names, have been transcribed as is customary. The romanization system used by Sandness (1999) has been retained in the examples of pre-modern Japanese taken from her book *The Evolution of the Japanese Past and Perfective Suffixes*. In the case of example sentences taken from the *Amakusaban Feique Monogatari*, the romanization system is that of the original text.

The romanization system used in transcribing Persian glosses corresponds to the one used in *Persian for Beginners* by Iraj Bashiri. The romanization system used in transcribing Russian glosses corresponds to the ISO system of transliteration. For the romanization of Mandarin, Hanyu Pinyin has been used. Tones are indicated through the use of diacritics. The romanization used in transcribing Korean glosses corresponds to the Yale system. In the case of Kurdish and Arabic, the exact transcriptions used in Tavangar and Amouzadeh (2006:99) have been retained.

### Typographical conventions

Italics have been used to mark non-English vocabulary. Single quotes have been used to denote translated vocabulary and example sentences, with double quotes being used in all other cases.

## Abbreviations

ADV	adverbial	BA	<i>ba</i>
CON	conjunctive	COP	copula
DAT	dative	DECL	declarative
DEF	definite	DP	deontic particle
FP	final particle	GER	gerund
HON	honorific	IMP	imperative
IMPF	imperfective	INF	infinitive
LE	<i>le</i>	LOC	locative
NEG	negative	NIMP	negative imperative
NPAST	nonpast	OBJ	object
PAST	past	PL	plural
POLITIMP	polite imperative	PRF	perfect
PRT	particle	PTCP	participle
QP	question particle	SBJ	subject
SG	singular	SUBJ	subjunctive
TARI	<i>-tari</i>	TOP	topic

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 The topic

The present thesis focuses on a phenomenon in colloquial Japanese in which an imperative is expressed through the use of the past tense marker *-ta*, as seen in the example sentences below.

- (1) Doi-ta,                    doi-ta!  
move.away-PAST move.away-PAST  
'Get out of my way!' (lit.) '(You) got out of my way!'
- (2) Kaet-ta,                    kaet-ta!  
go.home-PAST go.home-PAST  
'Go home!' (lit.) '(You) went home!'

The phenomenon has been referred to as *zonzaina meirei*, (variously translated as 'crude command' or 'rough command'), "indirect command", and other terms. In this paper it is called "imperative *-ta*", or "the *-ta* imperative". The paper is also concerned with a construction in which the suffix of aspect, *-tari* is used in a similar fashion. This construction shall be referred to as "imperative *-tari*".

- (3) Saa saa, it-tari        it-tari!  
Well well go-TARI go-TARI  
'Go on, scram!'

Much of the discussion will concern the concepts of tense and aspect. For the purposes of this thesis, tense is defined as the grammaticalization of time (see Lyons 1968, Comrie 1985). Aspect may be defined as the way in which we regard an action or situation independently of its location in time. The distinction between perfective and imperfective aspect (as in "I drove home" versus "I was driving") is normally viewed as the primary one, and it is also the distinction most important to the present discussion. "Perfectivity indicates the view of a situation as a single whole, without distinction of the various separate phases that make up that situation; while the imperfective pays essential attention to the internal structure of the situation" (Comrie 1976:16).

Another distinction must be made between perfective and completive aspect. Perfective aspect describes an action or event as bounded in time, while completive aspect expresses its completion. Perfective aspect describes an event as viewed as a whole, and if said event is in the past it is natural to assume that it must be ended and, thus, completed. However, as shown in chapter 2, it is advisable to be aware of differences between the two. A third distinction to be made is between lexical aspect or *Aktionsart* and grammatical aspect. Lexical aspect is a property of the verb itself, while grammatical aspect is the aspectual interpretation forced upon the verb by grammatical markers of aspect. For instance, the Japanese verb *matsu* ‘wait’ is intrinsically imperfective, but receives a perfective interpretation through the use of imperative *-ta*: *Matta matta!* ‘Wait up!’

## **1.2 Methodology, organization and data**

Chapter 2 of the present thesis constitutes a condensed version of a previous survey on the same subject (Svahn 2007). In the course of the chapter, the function of imperative *-ta* is described and analyzed using both the available literature on the subject and the input of a native informant. The rules governing the use of imperative *-ta* are illustrated through the use of example sentences and the intuitions of a male native speaker of Japanese in his early twenties, late of Hiroshima prefecture. Chapter 2 is not only an overview of what has been previously written on the subject, but also contains new information based on said input. The focus lies on the differences in usage between imperative *-ta* and other imperative constructions in Japanese, specifically regarding the connection of imperative *-ta* to the notion of perfective aspect. After summarizing previous research on the structure and function of imperative *-ta*, a tentative hypothesis is made as to the relationship of tense, aspect, and mood in explaining the phenomenon, the “advance *-ta* by proxy” hypothesis. The example sentences used throughout chapter 2 are gathered from a variety of sources; the existing literature, the informant, and the Internet, using the search engine *Google*. Some have been created by the author. Example sentences used in describing imperative *-ta* were checked for accuracy by the informant.

In chapter 3 the discussion turns to the role of the Japanese perfective imperative in a typological context. Uses of perfective markers or past tense markers in a perfective context to express non-canonical concepts such as an order, or the certain future, are identified in various languages, and their features are contrastively analyzed and compared to those of

imperative *-ta*. These phenomena are classified as being examples of deictic projection (Lyons 1977, Tavangar and Amouzadeh 2006). During the course of the survey, native informants and experts on the languages involved were interviewed. Data has also been taken from descriptive grammars and publications on tense and aspect relating to the relevant languages. The questions used to determine the properties of the expressions are listed in detail in the introduction to chapter 3. All example sentences with no source given were elicited from informants.

In chapter 4 the topic is once more the perfective imperative in Japanese, the purpose being a fuller analysis of the diachrony of the construction. Compared to the brief presentation in chapter 2 the presentation has been expanded, taking into account the literature available on the development of tense and aspect in the Japanese language. As Bjarke Frellesvig's survey of the history of Japanese (forthcoming) is not yet available, Karen Sandness's *The Evolution of the Japanese Past and Perfective Suffixes* (1999) has been used as the main source of data for the diachronic presentation. After an overview of imperative *-tari*, previous theories as to the origin of the phenomenon by Takagi (1971), Shinzato (2005a, b) and Cho (2003) are outlined and a final hypothesis presented.

In chapter 5 the concept of deictic projection is unified with the hypothesis of "advance *-ta* by proxy" as presented in chapter 2, and a proposed approach to analyzing the perfective imperative through conventionalization of implicature is presented. The chapter also deals with various issues such as the use of *Katta katta!* by shopkeepers, and the incompatibility of the aspectual marker *-te i-* with imperative *-ta*.

## Chapter 2

### Previous research

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter constitutes a summary of my bachelor's thesis, *Imperative -ta in colloquial Japanese: a descriptive analysis* (Svahn 2007). It also incorporates some material from the article of the same title (Svahn, in press) submitted to the proceedings of the 7th conference of the Nordic Association of Japanese and Korean Studies. Here I outline my sum of knowledge on imperative *-ta* at the beginning of the investigations culminating in the present thesis. All further discussion proceeds from the data found in this chapter. In the interest of brevity, some sections have been excised.<sup>1</sup> Statements made in the previous thesis and proven inaccurate by further research have been corrected.

In order to facilitate understanding the linguistic context of the imperative use of *-ta*, its basic properties are outlined in the following chapter, and an overview of the various imperative constructions available to Japanese speakers is then given. We move on to previous descriptions of imperative *-ta* in the literature, and a detailed account of the properties of the construction. This survey focuses on the differences in usage between imperative *-ta* and the other imperatives of Japanese. The differences are mainly manifested in a number of specific restrictions in usage, described in the subchapter bearing that title. Following the description proper, we move on to outline prior attempts at explaining the structure and function of imperative *-ta*. We then address historical and theoretic issues that lead on to a hypothesis of imperative *-ta* as a pragmatic extension of another use of the suffix, here termed advance *-ta*.

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<sup>1</sup> Those interested in a fuller account may view the original thesis at [http://theses.lub.lu.se/archive/2007/02/22/1172103967-4254-316/Imperative\\_ta\\_in\\_colloquial\\_Japanese.pdf](http://theses.lub.lu.se/archive/2007/02/22/1172103967-4254-316/Imperative_ta_in_colloquial_Japanese.pdf).

## 2.2 The past tense marker *-ta*

The question of whether the verbal suffix *-ta* is primarily a marker of aspect or of tense has been the subject of some debate.<sup>2</sup> The suffix is, however, generally used when referring to past events, contrasting with the verbal suffix *-ru* which, in turn, is generally used when referring to events in the present and future tense.

- (1) Taroo wa yoku miruku o nom-u.<sup>3</sup>  
Taroo TOP often milk OBJ drink-NPAST  
'Taroo often drinks milk.'
- (2) Taroo wa kinoo miruku o non-da.  
Taroo TOP yesterday milk OBJ drink-PAST  
'Taroo drank milk yesterday.'

The use of the *ta*-form generally corresponds to the English use of the present perfect or simple past, as seen in (3) and (4).

- (3) Moo tabe-ta?  
already eat-PAST  
'Have you eaten yet?'
- (4) Watashi wa senshuu hanbaagaa o tabe-ta.  
I TOP last week hamburger OBJ eat-PAST  
'Last week I ate a hamburger.'

However, this does not hold true in all cases. Kunihiro (1967) outlines nine distinct uses of the *ta*-form, five of which differ substantially from its basic function as a past tense marker, and in which *-ta* primarily expresses mood rather than tense. The following list is as summarized by Soga (1983:38f) and Hasegawa (1998). The example sentences and translations mostly follow the ones found in Hasegawa (1998), but the glossing is my own. The *-ta* form can express:

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<sup>2</sup> See Hasegawa (1998).

<sup>3</sup> The forms *-u* and *-da* as seen in these example sentences are allomorphs of the *-ru* and *-ta* forms, respectively.

1. a past action or state,
  - (5) Haha ni tegami o kai-ta  
 mother DAT letter OBJ write-PAST  
 'I wrote a letter to my mother.'
  
2. repeated habitual actions in the past,
  - (6) Ano koro wa yoku undoo shi-ta  
 that time TOP often exercise do-PAST  
 'I used to exercise frequently in those days.'
  
3. a past event occurring under specific circumstances,
  - (7) Kaer-u to sugu ni te o arat-ta  
 return-NPAST when immediately hand OBJ wash-PAST  
 'I would wash my hands immediately after I got home.'
  
4. a past situation which has lasted until present time,
  - (8) Ooki-ku nat-ta ne  
 big-ADV become-PAST FP  
 'You've grown, haven't you?'
  
5. the discovery of the existence of a state or situation,
  - (9) A, soko ni i-ta no  
 oh there LOC be-PAST FP  
 'Oh, there you are!'
  
6. the recall of a future event,
  - (10) A, ashita shiken ga at-ta!  
 oh tomorrow exam SBJ be-PAST  
 'Oh, I have an exam tomorrow!'

7. a request for the listener's confirmation of a fact,

- (11) Anata wa donata deshita ka  
you TOP who COP.PAST QP  
'Who are you?'

8. advance proclamation of the future realization of an action or situation,

- (12) Yoshi kat-ta!  
all right buy-PAST  
'All right, I'll buy it!'

9. and, finally, a command.

- (13) Doi-ta, doi-ta!  
move.away-PAST move.away-PAST  
'Step back! Step back!'

It is the imperative use of the *-ta* form as shown in (13) which shall be the focus of this chapter. However, as shall be shown in subchapter 2.8, imperative *-ta* is related to the other modal uses of *-ta*, in particular to the use illustrated in (12), and cannot be properly discussed without also mentioning them.

### 2.3 An overview of imperative constructions in Japanese

Imperatives are expressed in Japanese not only by the canonical imperative (from this point onward referred to as the *-e (ro)* imperative), but also by a variety of circumlocutions (Martin 1988:959). The suffix *-e (ro)* is the morphological marker of imperative mood in Japanese, and most other ways of expressing a command (although many will here for the sake of convenience be called imperatives) can be viewed as adapted uses of forms historically unrelated to the morphological imperative. They may thus be termed "non-canonical" imperatives. The *-e (ro)* suffix is also the imperative form which corresponds most closely to the *-ta* imperative.

- (14) Hora, mi-ro!  
hey see-IMP  
'Hey, look!'

As the *-e (ro)* imperative is highly informal and unsuitable for use in many social contexts, it is often replaced by circumlocutions such as *-te*, *-te kure*, and *-te kudasai*, which employ the gerund marker *-te* in lieu of the imperative marker, often also using honorific verbs to soften a request.

- (15) Dondon tabe-te kudasai.  
 heartily eat-GER give-IMP (HON)  
 ‘Feel free to eat!’

The polite imperative *-nasai* may also be used. The function of the suffix *-nasai*, is originally derived from the imperative form of the honorific verb *nasaru* ‘do’. Makino and Tsutsui (1986) state that it is “a polite imperative used by superiors such as parents or teachers to their inferiors”.

- (16) Sara wo arai-nasai!  
 plate OBJ wash-POLITIMP  
 ‘Wash the dishes!’

Sentence final particles such as *ne*, *yo* and *zo* may be used to give more nuance to a imperative, in the case of *ne* and *yo* typically softening the request made, and in the case of *zo* adding a degree of emphasis.

- (17) Chanto benkyoo shi-nasai ne/yo!  
 properly study do-POLITIMP FP  
 ‘Make sure to study properly!’

- (18) Hayaku nom-e zo!  
 quickly drink-IMP FP  
 ‘Drink quickly!’

Negative commands expressing a level of politeness comparable to the use of the *-e (ro)* imperative are typically expressed through the adding of the particle *na* ‘don’t’ to the basic nonpast form of the verb.

- (19) Sonna koto wo su-ru na!  
 such thing OBJ do-NPAST NIMP  
 ‘Don’t do such things!’

The *-te* imperative may be directly negated, allowing a negative gerund to be used as a negative imperative which, although informal, is softer in tone than the *-ru na* construction.

- (20) *Usu wo tsuk-anai-de!*  
lie OBJ say-NEG-GER  
'Don't lie!'

The negated *-te* form command may also be combined with auxiliary and/or honorific verbs such as the previously mentioned *kureru* and *kudasaru*.

- (21) *Usu wo tsuk-anai-de kur-e!*  
lie OBJ say-NEG-GER give-IMP  
'Don't lie!'

The *-ru* form may, under certain conditions, itself be used to express orders and commands. This construction is often used while giving instructions and describing procedures, and this is described as its main function by Takagi (1999:72). The *-masu* form can also be used, adding a degree of politeness. Soga (1983:44) states that "Depending upon the kind of verb, some [*-ru* imperatives] may aspectually be perfective, and others may be imperfective".

- (22) *Tats-u!*  
stand.up-NPAST  
'Stand up!'

Nominalizers such as *koto* and *mono* may be used to express commands and prohibitions.

- (23) *Go ji ni oki-ru koto!*  
five hour at get.up-NPAST fact  
'You must get up at five!'

Although there are other ways of expressing commands and requests in modern Japanese than the constructions listed above, this short overview shall suffice as to familiarize the reader with some of the most common expressions used. It is important to note that all of these constructions have a certain level of politeness/familiarity associated with them, and that they all have specific conditions governing when they may or may not be used.

- (24) Chotto sore tot-te/ \*tor-e!  
little that take-GER/ take-IMP  
'Get that for me, will you?'

In this sentence, the adverb *chotto* softens the request made, and it is thus incompatible with the crude *-e (ro)* imperative. Many imperative constructions in Japanese are limited in the range of adverbials that may be used with them. Imperative *-ta* is, as we shall see, especially limited in this regard (however, it is not incompatible with *chotto*).

It is worth noting that while the patterns described here apply to many situations of language use, they are on the level of prescriptive convention rather than outright grammatical restriction. That is to say, they may be intentionally violated by the speaker in order to produce various effects, such as highly marked statements, through the use of “incorrect” language.

Having had an overview of the constructions most closely related to the role of imperative *-ta*, we now move on to a description of the phenomenon itself.

## 2.4 Previous descriptions of imperative *-ta*

Imperative *-ta* has previously been touched upon by Japanese linguists, although most often as a passing example of nonpast uses of the *-ta* verbal suffix. Kindaichi (1953: 225) contested the view of Yamada (1936:354f) that the phenomenon of imperative *-ta* (among others) illustrates that *-ta* is not only a past tense marker, choosing instead to classify its use as irregular, and being that of a *fuhenkajodooshi* (“non-inflecting auxiliary verb”).<sup>4</sup> According to Takahashi (1985: 217), Suzuki (1965) referred to the function of imperative *-ta* as *zonzaina meirei*, which has variously been translated to English as “crude command” and “rough command”. It has also been called “indirect command”.<sup>5</sup>

Martin (1988: 966) mentions it only briefly. However, the analyses provided by Soga (1983), Hirata (1987) and Takagi (1999), combined with data provided by a native informant, allow one to make certain statements as to its function. The statements of Yoshida (1971) and Cho (2003) on imperative *-ta* are detailed in chapter 4.

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<sup>4</sup> It is not clear what Yamada means when describing imperative *-ta* as expressing a notion of *kettei* ‘decision’, as he places it in the same category as the adnominal use of the verb. Kindaichi, less opaquely, states that it does not express *kettei* but rather *meirei* ‘command’.

<sup>5</sup> These appear to be the most common terms for the phenomenon in English. Hirata uses the term “crude command”, while Soga uses “indirect command”. The term “rough command” is used by Martin.

## 2.5 The usage of imperative *-ta*

Before a more detailed description of imperative *-ta* is given, three statements shall be made as to its fundamental characteristics.

1. It functions as a highly informal imperative.
2. It is associated with a feeling of urgency on the part of the speaker.
3. It is not a phonetic alteration of another imperative construction (such as the *-te* or *-e* (*ro*) constructions mentioned in chapter 2), but is instead derived from the perfective function of the past tense marker *-ta* and its modal use in expressing the attitude of the speaker towards a given situation.

The first two statements are well supported in the literature. Teramura (1982:341), Takahashi (1985:217) and Hirata (1987:56) all stress the informality and urgency associated with imperative *-ta*, differentiating it from other imperative constructions. Teramura describes it as expressing an “urgent request” and Takahashi defines it as an *ima sugu no meirei*, an “immediate order”. Hirata states that imperative *-ta* is the least polite of all imperative constructions, and describes the distinction between imperative *-ta* and these other constructions as follows:

[. . .] *ta* command sentences would be used when the speaker wants to very impolitely command the hearer, and/or he wants to show his power over the hearer, and/or he wants to express his anger toward the hearer. It also implies that the event is very urgent so that the speaker wants an immediate reaction and a result from the hearer.

As the origin of imperative *-ta* and questions of aspect and mood are discussed in chapter 4, the discussion of the third statement is found there.

Imperative *-ta* might first be introduced to the non-native speaker of Japanese through the cry of the *yaoyasan* or grocery salesman, encouraging potential customers to buy his goods:

- (25) Saa, banana kat-ta, kat-ta!  
well banana buy-PAST buy-PAST  
‘Bananas for sale!’

Alternatively, through the cry of the *sumo* referee or *gyooji*, encouraging the wrestlers to stay in the ring:

- (26) Hakkeyoi<sup>6</sup>, nokot-ta      nokot-ta!  
go            remain-PAST remain-PAST  
'Hang in there!'

Or through the cry of the *choohan*<sup>7</sup> dealer, informing the gamblers that the time has come to make a bet:

- (27) Saa, hat-ta            hat-ta!  
well place-PAST place-PAST  
'Place your bets!'

Although these stylized expressions are probably the most visible use of imperative *-ta*, the construction is also used in everyday speech, as in the following examples:

- (28) Chotto mat-ta!  
little wait-PAST  
'Wait a little!'

- (29) Yame-ta yame-ta!  
stop-PAST stop-PAST  
'Stop it!'

Generally a degree of urgency, and a high level of emotional involvement by the speaker is expressed, more so than would be expressed by the use of the *-e (ro)* imperative. Hirata (1987:55) states that it is characteristically associated with a feeling of anger on the part of the speaker, although, as seen in the examples of the *yaoyasan* and the *gyooji*, this cannot always be the case.

An imperative *-ta* sentence is differentiated from a declarative *-ta* sentence (one in which the past tense suffix *-ta* is used in its normal role as a past tense marker) not only by

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<sup>6</sup> Interjection used to encourage clinching wrestlers.

<sup>7</sup> A form of gambling involving dice.

context, but also by high stressed pitch in the final syllable of the verb, delineating its function as a command (Soga 1983:68), and expressing emotion (Hirata 1987:55).

There are essentially no instances in which imperative *-ta must* be used, nor even any instances in which it is the most appropriate of all the imperative constructions available to a Japanese speaker (differing from constructions such as the formal *-te kudasai*). It may, except for the few stylized expressions which require its use, always be replaced by an imperative construction using the *-te* or *-e (ro)* verbal suffixes.

(30) Chotto mat-te/ mat-ta!  
little wait-GER/wait-PAST  
'Wait a little!'

(31) Yame-ro yame-ro/ Yame-ta yame-ta!  
stop-IMP stop-IMP stop-PAST stop-PAST  
'Stop it!'

The verbs used tend towards basic everyday vocabulary, such as *miru* 'see', *doku* 'move over', *yameru* 'stop' *kau* 'buy' *matsu* 'wait' etc. As shall be discussed in 3.4, the limited range of vocabulary employed may be regarded as a consequence of the (generally informal) contexts in which imperative *-ta* is normally used rather than a restriction inherent to the construction itself.

As with other imperative constructions, the person(s) to which the command expressed by imperative *-ta* is intended may be explicitly referred to in the sentence. Although such a phrasing technically refers to the subject in third-person, as stated by Martin (1988: 959), the sentence may be viewed as addressed to the person mentioned and thus second-person in meaning. Although other imperative constructions tend to employ the subject marker *ga* for this use, in imperative *-ta* sentences it seems that the topic marker *wa* is preferred.

(32) Jamamono wa doi-ta doi-ta!  
nuisance TOP move.away-PAST move.away-PAST  
'Get out of the way, you nuisance!'

The adverbs used in imperative *-ta* sentences commonly express immediacy and/or urgency.

(33) Sassa to yat-ta!  
quickly do-PAST  
'Do it quickly!'

(34) Kai- owat- ta yatsu wa tutto to de-ta de-ta!  
buy-finish-PAST fellow TOP at once go.out-PAST go.out-PAST  
'Those who have finished buying can get out at once!'

However, in contrast to other imperative constructions, adverbs placing the action ordered outside of the immediate future cannot be used. This corresponds to what Hirata (1987:56) has said about the speaker wanting an "immediate reaction and a result from the hearer".

(35) Ashita yar-e/ \*yat-ta!  
tomorrow do-IMP/do-PAST  
'Do it tomorrow!'

This restriction applies to the action itself and not events resulting from it, as actions occurring immediately the consequences of which affect future events may still be ordered.

(36) Hora, ashita no shukudai hayaku yat-ta yat-ta!  
look tomorrow GEN homework quickly do-PAST do-PAST  
'Do the homework for tomorrow!'

Adverbs implying a leisurely pace in the action performed may not be used, corresponding to the requirement that the action be of an urgent nature.

(37) Yukkuri yar-e/ \*yatta!  
slowly do-IMP/do-PAST  
'Do it slowly!'

Similarly, temporal adverbials expressing that the action ordered takes place over a period of time may not be used. The significance of this shall be discussed further in 2.7.

(38) Go-fun ma-te/ \*mat-ta!  
five minutes wait-IMP/wait-PAST  
'Wait for five minutes!'

The imperfective (or progressive) aspect marking verbal auxiliary *-te i-* may also not be used. The significance of this shall also be discussed further.

- (39) Mat-te i-ro/ \*mat-te i-ta!  
wait-GER be-IMP/wait-GER be-PAST  
'Wait!'

Iteration of the verb is common in imperative *-ta*, somewhat less so when the verb is paired with adverbs. The phenomenon is not exclusive to imperative *-ta*. It is seen in imperatives employing the suffixes *-e (ro)* and *-te* as well, although not as consistently as with *-ta*.<sup>8</sup> A possible explanation for this is found in the diachronic hypothesis advanced by Shinzato (2005), as seen in chapter 4.

- (40) Hora, damar-e damar-e/ damat-ta damat-ta!  
hey be.quiet-IMP be.quiet-IMP /be.quiet-PAST be.quiet-PAST  
'Shut up! Shut up!'

While Hirata states that it is the least polite of all imperative constructions, both Shirota (1998:34) and my informant confirm that imperative *-ta* may, as with the *-e (ro)* imperative, be used not only as a rude way of giving an order, but also as a way of displaying intimacy among close friends. This might be viewed as a parallel to the way in which similarly rude personal pronouns (such as the second person *kisama*) may be used to express informality, and by extension, social intimacy.

Imperative *-ta* is not as often used as the other imperative constructions seen in the above example sentences, and based on both my personal observations and statements made by the informant, I conclude that its use is comparatively rare. When imperative *-ta* is used by younger people, it is often between friends, and then in an ironic manner, to make an order or request seem comical. This nuance is communicated through the (presumably theatrical) way in which the request is made. However, there are still instances in which imperative *-ta* is used by people of younger generations with none of this comical intent. Among older generations, the "serious" use of imperative *-ta* seems to be more prevalent, and it is used by

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<sup>8</sup> Martin (1988:962) states that "Iterated imperatives are sometimes used for vividness or insistence", but only lists the *-e (ro)* form as an example of their use.

middle aged people towards younger people with no humorous intent. However, as these are statements made by one individual informant, they should not be regarded as definitive.<sup>9</sup> The use of imperative *-ta* may in many situations be virtually identical to the use of other imperative forms, with only a slight difference in nuance.

Further, as the Standard Japanese of the specific informant may be influenced by the aspectual system of Western Japanese, the intuitions described here may not fully match up with those elicited from native Tokyo dialect speakers. The influence of dialect on peripheral uses of tense/aspect remains a topic for further research.

(41) Dok-e/                doi-ta!  
      move.away-IMP/move.away-PAST  
      ‘Get out of the way!’

(42) Mi-te/     mi-ta!  
      see-GER/see-PAST  
      ‘Look!’

As previously mentioned, there are no circumstances in which a *-ta* imperative may not be replaced with another imperative construction. However, the inverse is not true. While the use of all imperative constructions in Japanese is governed by social factors, imperative *-ta* is, beside these social conventions, subject to a number of highly specific restrictions, both in the situational context in which it may be used and in the auxiliary verbs (and particles) which may be used with it. These restrictions limit the use of imperative *-ta* as opposed to other imperative constructions. Martin (1988:961) states that “Theoretically, an imperative form could be made from any verbal sentence, but in practice you find limitations.” He goes on to list reasons of semantic incompatibility (for example the use of honorific verbs with the *-e* (*ro*) imperative and the impossibility of the use of verbs describing events not subject to human control) as examples of these limitations. Imperative *-ta* is subject to these general limitations as well as to the ones previously mentioned in this chapter, such as restrictions in the adverbials and verbal auxiliaries that may be used. Having seen the contexts in which imperative *-ta* is used, we may tentatively outline the rules governing its use and giving rise to the further restrictions which shall be listed below.

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas Gross (personal communication) reports a possible use of *Matta matta!* ‘Wait!’ by young children, in the form of *Tamma tamma!*, a case of syllabic metathesis.

I argue that the *-ta* imperative can successfully be substituted for another imperative construction in any sentence in which the following conditions are met:

1. The speaker is in a position to make an informal request of the hearer<sup>10</sup>,
2. in the context of the utterance, the speaker desires that the action ordered be immediately carried out,
3. the hearer is capable of voluntarily and immediately performing said action,
4. the verb used expresses an instantaneous transition from one state to another, corresponding with the notion of perfective (or completive) aspect.

The requirement that the speaker be in a position to make an informal request of the hearer would seem to prohibit the use of honorific verbs and expressions with imperative *-ta*.<sup>11</sup>

- (43) \*Meshiagat-ta      meshiagat-ta!  
eat (HON)-PAST eat (HON)-PAST  
'Eat!'

The degree of urgency involved in the context of the sentence is crucial in determining whether imperative *-ta* can be substituted for a standard imperative construction. The following sentence (without any explicit context) would not typically merit using imperative *-ta*:

- (44) Mado    wo    ake-ro    /?ake-ta!  
window OBJ open-IMP/open-PAST  
'Open the window!'

However, if we supply a context implying that the speaker urgently desires that the action be performed, imperative *-ta* can be used.

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<sup>10</sup> An apparent exception from this rule is the case of the *yaoyasan*, which is discussed in chapter 5.

<sup>11</sup> As pointed out by Larm (2006: 185), the *-e (ro)* imperative does not have this restriction.

Doozo, meshiagar-e.  
please eat (HON)-IMP  
'Please eat.' (super polite) (Larm 2006: 185)

- (45) Kusai! Mado wo ake-ro /ake-ta!  
 foul-smelling window OBJ open-IMP/open-PAST  
 ‘It stinks in here! Open the window!’

Once again, the following sentence requires a specific context without which the use of imperative *-ta* will be perceived as unnatural.

- (46) Shukudai shiro /?shi-ta shi-ta!  
 homework do.IMP/ do-PAST do-PAST  
 ‘Do your homework!’

- (47) Saa geemu wa iikagen ni shi-te shukudai shi-ta shi-ta!  
 well game TOP moderate amount DAT do-GER homework do-PAST do-PAST  
 ‘Stop playing computer games and go do your homework!’

In the context of (47), an exasperated parent is ordering his or her child to stop playing computer games and start doing homework, a task which presumably should have been completed quite some time ago.

We now return to the matter of the range of verbs employed in imperative *-ta* sentences. Teramura (1982:341) states that the use of imperative *-ta* appears to be restricted to action verbs, while Shirota (1998:34) notes that its use is believed to be restricted to informal vocabulary in every-day usage. These observations, although on the whole accurate, do not touch upon the underlying rules which give rise to these restrictions.

As previously stated, it is true that the verbs used in imperative *-ta* sentences commonly span only a limited amount of informal, everyday vocabulary. However, this is only a tendency, not a rule. The fact that most vocabulary employed in imperative *-ta* sentences is informal is because imperative *-ta* is most often used in such a context, and because the restriction that the action described by the *-ta* verb be immediately performed prohibits the use of a large array of vocabulary expressing more abstract concepts and actions, which, barring a highly improbable context, may not be immediately and voluntarily executed. A sentence such as

- (48) ?Sengen shi-ta shi-ta!  
 declaration do-PAST do-PAST  
 ‘Make a declaration!’

seems unnatural if not provided with such a context. Thus, while technically grammatical it is perceived as highly unnatural. However, even sentences such as the seemingly nonsensical

- (49) ?Kasekika shi-ta shi-ta!  
fossil change do-PAST do-PAST  
'Fossilize!'

could conceivably be felicitous given the existence of a proper context, although in the case of this particular sentence that context would likely be found only in fiction.

The reason that it is hard to conceive of a context for (49) is not only because fossilization takes a great deal of time, but also because it is not a voluntary process. Some intrinsically involuntary verbs (here exemplified by *shinu*, 'die') may be used in standard imperatives, but their use in imperative *-ta* appears to require extraordinary circumstances.

- (50) Shin-e/ ?shin-da!  
die-IMP/die-PAST  
'Drop dead!'

In the case of the involuntary verb *shinu*, the conditions under which it may be felicitously used as a *-ta* form imperative, as exemplified by my informant, entail the existence of an entity with the ability to voluntarily and instantly cease to exist (or return to death from a state of un-death), such as a ghost, and a speaker commanding it to do so.

- (51) Saa, otonashi-ku shin-da shin-da!  
well obedient-ADV die-PAST die-PAST  
'Obey my word and die!' (lit. 'Die obediently!')

In this case, a ghost has appeared and the speaker brusquely commands it to return to the realm of the dead.

As we have seen, given a fitting context the range of verbs which may be used in an imperative *-ta* sentence widens considerably. However, the restrictions governing the use of vocabulary in imperative *-ta* sentences might not be fundamentally different from those of other imperatives. Martin (1988:961) states that verbs describing events not subject to human control will not appear in imperative forms. This restriction applies both to the *-e (ro)* imperative and to imperative *-ta*. Although no corpus study of the content of imperative *-ta* sentences compared to other imperative constructions has been undertaken, it is probable that the vocabulary used will be mostly identical with that of the similarly informal *-e (ro)*

imperative. Still, it is also probable that the specific restriction, in the case of imperative *-ta*, that the action performed be immediate will somehow influence the selection of vocabulary.

As pointed out by Hirata (1987:56) among others, imperative *-ta* cannot be negated, and cannot be used to express a negative command.

- (52) Yaru na/        \*Yar-anakat-ta!  
do-NIMP        / do-NEG-PAST  
‘Don’t do it!’

Soga (1983:67) explains the reason for this restriction thus:

There is no negative form of the indirect command using the past tense form [. . .] The reason for this seems to be that the verb in the indirect command of the *-ta* form must be “completive” in its underlying structure. However, a negative Japanese verb becomes adjectival and so imperfective, thus becoming irrelevant to the notion of completion.

Hirata (1987:55) seems to be referring to the same phenomenon when she notes that imperative *-ta* sentences “employ verbs which can bring an event to completion”. This underlying requirement is the reason why neither the progressive aspect marking verbal auxiliary *-te i-* nor adverbials expressing that the action ordered takes place over a period of time (such as *gofun*, here meaning ‘for five minutes’) can be used in an imperative *-ta* sentence. The reason that adverbials such as *gofun* are incompatible with imperative *-ta* is not primarily because they imply that the action described is not immediately realized, but rather because they are incompatible with the notion of perfective aspect. In Japanese, the notion of perfective or imperfective aspect is semantically encoded in the verb. A perfective verb may be rendered imperfective by the use of the verbal auxiliary *-te i-*. Thus, imperative *-ta* denies the use of this construction. For a discussion of *-te i-* in non-progressive contexts and why it may not even then occur in *-ta* imperatives, see chapter 5.

In using other imperative constructions, the speaker has the choice of adding the notion of imperfectivity by the use of this verbal auxiliary. When using imperative *-ta*, one does not have that option. This is perhaps the most significant restriction inherent to the use of imperative *-ta*, and deeply connected to its relation to perfective aspect.

As we have seen in 2.3, a number of sentence final particles, most notably *yo*, *ne* and *zo*, can be used in Japanese imperative constructions to give nuance to the statement, often softening a command. No such particles may be used in an imperative *-ta* sentence.

- (53) \*Mat-ta      ma-tta      yo/ne/zo  
 wait-PAST wait-PAST FP  
 ‘Wait!’

This might be explained by the highly abrupt nature of the command expressed by imperative *-ta*, allowing no final particles to soften or nuance the statement, in much the same way as the *-e (ro)* imperative, as stated by Larm (2006:188), does not allow the use of the “friendly” sentence final particle *ne*.<sup>12</sup> A different possible explanation is found in subchapter 2.8.

## 2.6 The structure of imperative *-ta*: previous theories

Some statements have been made in the literature as to the structure of imperative *-ta*, among them hypotheses by Yoshida (1971) Soga (1983) Takagi (1999) and Cho (2003). Teramura (1982:341) states the following (my translation):

Guessing at the feelings of the speaker, we may believe that he, in a state of emotional tension, in order to entice the hearer into performing a desired act, presents the action to the hearer as something that has already become reality.

Shirota (1998:34) classifies imperative *-ta* as being a secondary function of the past tense form, that is to say a function only active under a limited set of circumstances, and functioning as an imperative. He further mentions a phenomenon in Russian analogous to imperative *-ta*, in which the past tense forms of perfective verbs may be used as an imperative. This construction, along with perfective imperatives in other languages, shall be discussed in chapter 3.

Soga (1983:66-68) has this to say about the structure of imperative *-ta*:

The structure of the *-ta* indirect command is evidently more complicated than that of the *-ru* indirect command. This is because the former implies that the hearer is directed to be in a state in which the action expressed by the verb is already completed. Semantically, it is very similar to an English imperative sentence such as “Be gone”!

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<sup>12</sup> The *-e (ro)* imperative does, however, allow the use of the sentence final particle *yo*, which similarly serves to soften the request made.

He further argues that a sentence such as *Saa, katta, katta!* ‘Come on, make a purchase, make a purchase!’ can be expressed as *Katta jootai ni are!* (lit. ‘Be in the state of having bought [it]’). Everything except for the verb *katta* ‘bought’ is deleted, and a high stressed pitch is added to the final syllable of the verb to denote its function as a command. The statements made by Takagi (1999) as to the structure of imperative *-ta* will be presented in 2.8.

## 2.7 Imperative *-ta* and “fossilized aspect”

Martin (1988:966) refers to a statement by Yoshida (1971) that the use of *-tari* as an imperative was common in the Edo period (1603-1868). We shall return to this in chapter 4. Further, Kudoo (1985) states that (my trans.):

Among (other) modals, there may exist cases in which the old meaning has been preserved (lit. ‘fossilized’) without a differentiation of tense and aspect. Possibly, constructions such as *Saa saa, doita doita!* ‘Get out of the way!’ and *Saa saa, ittari ittari!* ‘Go!’ are special uses that originated before recent times, in an age where *-ta(ri)* had not yet become a past tense marker, and are preserved in the form of an imperative, one-word construction.

Thus we learn that imperative *-ta* originated as a construction in earlier Japanese which may be termed imperative *-tari*. A sentence such as

- (54) *Saa saa, it-tari it-tari!*  
 well go-TARI go-TARI  
 ‘Go!’

in Edo-era Japanese corresponds to the modern

- (55) *Saa saa, it-ta it-ta!*  
 well go-PAST go-PAST  
 ‘Go!’

The main difference here is that the imperative function previously filled by a perfective marker (for a discussion of the functions of *-tari*, see below) is now filled by a past tense suffix. This is because *-tari* over time developed into *-ta*, which, as previously shown, may express a wide range of past and present tense states. However, my informant does not

recognize the imperative use of *-tari*. The probable reasons for this shall be discussed in chapter 4.

We shall now take a look at the perfective suffix *-tari* itself.

- (56) Ware wa mo ya Yasumiko e- tari.  
I TOP oh Yasumiko win-TARI  
'Oh, I have won Yasumiko!' (Shinzato 2005a:1, originally from the *Manyooshuu*, 8<sup>th</sup> century)

In classical Japanese, *-tari* is a suffix distinct from past tense suffixes such as *-ki* and *-keri*.<sup>13</sup> Sandness (1999:19) defines it as a “stative-resultative” and states that most Japanese scholars view it this way, while Sansom (1928:128) argues that it often performed the function of a perfect, and Shinzato (2005a:1) refers to it as a perfective suffix.<sup>14</sup> Although Sandness states that few view it as a perfective marker (1999:19), for the purpose of the discussion we shall follow Shinzato in describing it as such, for the reason that, in the contexts which are relevant to our discussion, it appears in perfective contexts. Further, if we accept that imperative *-ta* is derived from the aspectual suffix *-tari* but regard it as a “stative-resultative” exclusively, we will have problems in explaining how the use of imperative *-ta* is today restricted to perfective-completive (see 2.9) contexts while resultative constructions such as the *-te i-* form of *shunkanteki* ‘punctual’ verbs (see below) cannot function as imperatives in the manner of imperative *-ta* (see 5.4).

Shinzato (2005a:1) also describes *-tari* as “signaling the completion of an event”, and it is this aspect of its use that is most important here. We shall discuss its function further in chapter 4. The *-tari* suffix would eventually develop into *-ta*, the main past tense marker of Japanese. As it did so, this strictly perfective sense was retained in constructions such as imperative *-ta*, as previously stated by Kudoo (1985). Soga (1983:39f) explains that

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<sup>13</sup> *-ki* and *-keri* may be viewed as expressing past tense, and past tense with a nuance of subjectivity, respectively.

<sup>14</sup> The lack of consensus on the function of the suffixes of tense and aspect in pre-modern Japanese is regrettable. Although the use of the suffixes changed over time, no unity appears to have been reached even as to their use in the Classical Japanese of the Heian period.

In classical Japanese, the form *-tari* and *nu* as well as *tu* were used to express the meaning of completive aspect. Past tense was expressed by different forms such [*sic*] *ki* or *keri*. However, by around the middle of the sixteenth century, *-tari* had changed to *-ta* and has survived to this day, taking on the function of the past tense marker as well as the completive aspect marker. Therefore, tense may often seem to be a subcategory of aspect.

The *-ta* of imperative *-ta* is thus not a (past) tense marker, but rather a preserved marker of aspect, and it is clear that aspect here overrides tense. Soga (1983:68) notes that “[. . .] the *-ta* form for indirect command is certainly aspectual [. . .]”. The fact that *-ta(ri)* was used as an imperative while still strictly an aspectual marker shows that imperative *-ta* is not based on the notion of past tense but rather (the modal use of) aspect. The relationship between aspect and mood in the case of imperative *-ta* is discussed in 2.8. Teramura (1982:111) notes that Kindaichi (1953) classified the *-ta* in imperative *-ta* as not being contrasted with the nonpast *-ru* suffix. This further supports regarding it as a suffix of aspect (or mood) rather than a suffix of tense.

We now move on to a final discussion of the connection between imperative *-ta* and perfective aspect. In Japanese, verbs that the verbal auxiliary *-te i-* render stative or resultative in aspect rather than progressive can be seen as intrinsically perfective. Thus, a sentence such as *Neko ga shinde iru* is correctly translated into English as ‘The cat is dead’ or ‘The cat has died’ rather than ‘The cat is dying’. These verbs have been classified by Kindaichi as *shunkanteki* or ‘punctual’ verbs (Martin 1988:273f). Correspondingly, many verbs rendered progressive in aspect by the *-te i-* auxiliary can be viewed as intrinsically imperfective. As we have previously seen, imperative *-ta* cannot be used together with *-te i-* constructions, regardless of their being progressive, resultative, or stative in aspect. A further discussion of this topic is found in chapter 5.

However, in the context of imperative *-ta*, intrinsically imperfective verbs appear to take on a perfective quality. The verbs *matsu* ‘wait’ and *hataraku* ‘work’ are intrinsically imperfective:

- (57) *Gojikan hatarai-ta/ hatarai-te i-ta.*  
 five.hour work-PAST/ work-GER be-PAST  
 ‘He worked for five hours.’
- (58) *Go fun mat-e/ mat-te i-ro!*  
 five minute wait-IMP/ wait-GER be-IMP  
 ‘Wait for five minutes!’

I argue that when in the context of imperative *-ta*, they take on a perfective aspect, with the speaker desiring an instantaneous transition from one state to another.

(59) *Mat-ta mat-ta!*  
wait-PAST wait-PAST  
'Wait up/stop!'

(60) *Hatarai-ta hatarai-ta!*  
work-PAST work-PAST  
'Get to work!'

The verb *matsu* in a sentence such as *Matta matta!* does not strictly mean 'wait' as in existing in a state of inaction, but rather signifies an abrupt, immediate transition from doing something to not doing something, expressed more faithfully in English by expressions such as "to stop" or "to cease and desist". Similarly, *Hataraita hataraita!* does not strictly mean 'Work!' but rather '(Don't stand around!) Get to work!' signifying an immediate transition from a state of not working to a state of working.

When compared with Vendler's *aktionsarten*, it appears that the aspectual characteristics associated with imperative *-ta* most closely resemble those of his category of Achievements, with the characteristics of instantaneousness and telicity being shared. However, verbs belonging to both Kindaichi's durative and *shunkanteki* 'instantaneous' categories, which roughly correspond to Vendler's Accomplishments and Achievements (Ogihara 1998:93-99), may be used in imperative *-ta* sentences.

## 2.8 Imperative *-ta* as a speech act

Taken at face value, a sentence such as *Banana katta katta!* (lit. 'You bought a banana!') appears counterfactual, as the person to whom the statement is addressed has clearly not yet performed this action and may not even have any intention of doing so. As we know, the intended function of the sentence is not to inform the hearer that he just has bought a banana, but rather to make him buy one. When viewed using the theory of the speech act, as defined by Searle (1969), the relationship of the grammatical form of an imperative *-ta* statement to its intended function becomes clearer. In the case of imperative *-ta*, the function of the

statement is not representative (expressing what the speaker believes to be fact) but directive (urging the hearer to perform the action described by the statement).

The speaker of an imperative *-ta* sentence wishes to change reality through giving a statement describing a non-realized action (in this case, the buying of a banana by the hearer) and using the statement to make the hearer perform the action, in effect giving an order. As previously mentioned, the imperative function of the sentence is marked by high stressed pitch. Since the grammatical structure of an imperative *-ta* sentence is not that of a true imperative sentence (specifically, using a seeming past tense marker instead of an imperative marker), it can be said to constitute an indirect speech act.

## 2.9 “Advance *-ta* by proxy”: a hypothesis

We return now to one of the uses of *-ta* as seen in subchapter 2.2, namely the “advance proclamation of the future realization of an action or situation”, which Soga (1983:66) states has been referred to as “advance recognition” by Kunihiro. Soga himself refers to it as “future completed state”, while Hirata (1987:53) refers to it as “declaration or concession in advance”. In this paper, it shall be referred to as “advance *-ta*”.

- (61) Make-*ta*, make-*ta*!  
lose-PAST lose-PAST  
‘Oh no, (we) are going to lose!’ (lit. ‘We have lost!’)

In using advance *-ta*, the speaker expresses his conviction that an event shall come to pass by referring to it as if it already has. In the case of (61), a plausible context might be that a sports fan is watching his favorite team play, and realizes that although the game is not yet over, the team has no chance of winning. The construction may also be used to announce the speaker’s intentions, as seen in (12). Soga (1983:66) distinguishes between two varieties of advance recognition, exemplified by *Kita kita!* ‘He is coming’ (lit. ‘He came’). and *Kono shiai wa moratta!* ‘We will win this game’ (lit. ‘We won this game’). However, he states that they are closely associated. The difference lies in the certainty involved. The *Kita kita!* variety typically requires some evidence as to the imminent completion of the event (such as catching sight of a person in the distance), while advance *-ta* of the second kind may be used before the event has even begun (Soga states that one may announce a game as won or lost before it has even started). Both are included in my definition of advance *-ta*. The discussion will here

mostly concern the latter type, but constructions of the *Kita kita!* type found in other languages will be discussed further in chapter 3.

The restrictions to use of adverbials, lack of the possibility of negation, requirement that the verb used be completive in nature, iteration of the verb, and lack of sentence final particles that are the main characteristics of imperative *-ta* are all found in advance *-ta* as well. The constructions are strikingly similar, with the difference being that while the function of the speech act performed in uttering an imperative *-ta* sentence is that of a directive (a command), the function of advance *-ta* seems to have the characteristics of both a representative (stating a fact) and an expressive (describing the emotions of the speaker at the present moment). Both are associated with the expression of emotion on the part of the speaker. As described by Hirata (1987: 58), advance *-ta* is associated with emotions including both pleasure and disappointment, in contrast to imperative *-ta*, which is most often associated with anger. The main point to note here is the way in which the aspect of the verb is used to express certainty, taking on a modal nature. Soga (1990:104), states the following:

If the past tense form is used, it indicates that the speaker perceives the situation to be remote, but if the nonpast tense is used, it means that the past situation is perceived as if it were directly before the speaker. Put another way, the use of the past tense suggests a detached and objective attitude on the part of the speaker toward the situation, but the use of the nonpast tense suggests the speaker's subjective and psychological involvement with the situation. [. . .] the difference in use between past and nonpast tense markers reflects a difference in the speaker's or writer's perception of and psychological attitude toward the situation being described, and *that* is a modality difference.

I argue that the modal use (in expressing certainty) of imperative and advance *-ta* is derived, not from tense (as in Soga's argument on a different topic), but rather from the perfective aspect expressed by the *-ta(ri)* suffix. Hasegawa (1998) states the following:

If the speaker is confident about a given situation having been completed (the notion of perfective), the addressee naturally interprets it as having occurred in the past. Tense thereby emerges as something secondary.

It would seem that the notion of perfectivity (or completivity) is associated with finality, and thus objectivity. Sandness (1999:77) states that "Since the essential meaning of *-ta* is completion of action, it can indicate either past or future completion [...]" . Although it is still his subjective opinion, the speaker of an advance *-ta* sentence is expressing that the perceived

reality of a future event is so great that it can be viewed as completed. He is thus expressing the perceived objectivity of a situation in a subjective way.

As stated by Soga, the use of the *-ta* suffix conveys a greater impression of detachment and objectivity than would have been signaled by the use of *-ru*. Imperative and advance *-ta* statements describe an event as being indisputably “over and done with”, as being something that can be objectively determined to have ended. Although its consequences remain, they express that the fact that the event itself has already taken place is beyond discussion. These uses of the *-ta* forms, are, in effect, the speaker's way of expressing their subjective opinion that the reality of an event is beyond question, although the event may not actually have reached its completion as of the time of speaking.

Takagi (1999:75) states that imperative *-ta*, rather than expressing a direct request, serves to “entice an expression of the content of the mind” (the Japanese term used is *ishi no hyoomei wo hikidasu*). In the example used by Takagi, the salesman entices the customer with *Saa, katta katta!* ‘Come on, make a purchase!’ to which the customer responds *Yoshi, katta!* ‘Okay, I’ll buy it!’. Note here the consecutive use of imperative and advance *-ta*. The salesman, in using imperative *-ta*, seeks to entice the customer into expressing thoughts of buying his goods. It would thus seem that imperative *-ta* here cannot be strictly called an imperative, as its role is one of encouragement rather than command.

Unlike the speaker of an advance *-ta* sentence, who expresses his certainty that an event will be brought to completion, the speaker of an imperative *-ta* sentence does not know whether the hearer shall choose to obey him and perform the action. It would seem that the speaker, proclaiming that the imminent completion of an action by the hearer is beyond all doubt, (so much so that one may refer to it as having already been completed), is trying to coerce the hearer into accepting his or her vision of reality and conform to it by performing said action.

Going beyond Takagi, I posit a hypothesis that, while not without its demerits, may prove useful in understanding the psychological processes underlying imperative *-ta*. I argue that the structure of an imperative *-ta* sentence should not be understood as

(62) (Anata ga) kat-ta      kat-ta!  
you    SBJ buy-PAST buy-PAST  
‘Buy it!’(lit. ‘(You) have bought it!’)

but rather as:

- (63) (Watashi ga) kat-ta kat-ta!  
I SBJ buy-PAST buy-PAST  
'Buy it!' (lit. '(I) have bought it!')

In uttering a *-ta* imperative, the speaker is

1. Projecting himself in the hearer's place, in effect "becoming" the hearer.
2. Projecting himself (the speaker/hearer) into a future in which he has already completed the action expressed by his statement.

The speaker is, in effect, putting himself in the hearer's shoes, and dictating the contents of the hearer's mind at the moment of speaking. He or she is uttering an advance *-ta* sentence from the perspective of the hearer, and imperative *-ta* is thus an "advance *-ta* by proxy". Using a crude analogy, the salesman is here saying something like "Repeat after me: I will buy it!" to which the customer responds "I will buy it!". Of course, the hearer does not have to actually repeat the statement for the command expressed by the imperative *-ta* sentence to be obeyed, he needs only to realize the proposition expressed therein.

Yule (1996:56) states that "Indirect speech acts are generally associated with greater politeness in English than direct speech acts". This is true for Japanese as well, with directive statements such as *Mado wo akete kurenai?* 'Will you not open the window for me?' being perceived as more polite than *Mado wo akete kure!* 'Open the window for me!' It is thus interesting that imperative *-ta*, which functions as an indirect speech act, is perceived to be the most impolite imperative construction of all.

The act of directing the very thoughts of the hearer is an extreme deviation from the tendency, in the Japanese language, to avoid situations in which definite statements are made about a person's feelings and intentions, and this may account for the rudeness associated with imperative *-ta*. The view that the speaker is dictating the contents of the speaker's mind would also explain why sentence-final particles are not used in imperative *-ta* type sentences. Advance *-ta* sentences, of which imperative *-ta* sentences may be viewed as a subcategory, express the contents of the speaker's mind at the time of the utterance, and can be compared to interjections in that they serve as an immediate verbal expression of the subjective experience of the speaker.

The sentence *Itai* 'it hurts/it is painful' is a factual statement, and may use sentence final particles as markers of illocutionary force.<sup>15</sup> However, *itai!* 'ouch' is an interjection, expressing the subjective experience of the speaker at the moment it is uttered, and may not take sentence final particles. Because of the similarity of advance (and by extension) imperative *-ta* sentences to interjections of this kind, the same rules apply. If advance *-ta* sentences lack sentence final particles, it follows that imperative *-ta* sentences too should lack them.

The hypothesis presented here is not without its problems. If an imperative *-ta* utterance is understood to be spoken from an (imaginary) first person perspective, the occurrence of sentences such as

- (32) Jamamono wa doi-ta                      doi-ta!  
 nuisance TOP move.away-PAST move.away-PAST  
 'Get out of the way, you nuisance!'

becomes difficult to explain. It is difficult to believe that a person uttering an advance *-ta* sentence would refer to himself as 'a nuisance'. It can be theorized that only the second part of the sentence, consisting of the predicate, is expressed from the hearer's perspective, with the first part only specifying for whom, exactly, the statement is intended (out of several hearers present), and not strictly being part of the imperative *-ta* construction itself.

## 2.10 The issue of aspect

In Svahn (2007), the position was taken that *-tari* expressed perfect aspect and that, diachronically, the driving force behind imperative *-ta* was a remnant of this function. However, the terms "perfective" and "completive" were also used, especially when discussing the aspect of the verbs involved in the construction (this is not to state that the two terms were used interchangeably). It was further stated that "At this point, a clear distinction between the roles of perfective and perfect aspect becomes somewhat difficult to uphold, as both seem relevant in their relation to imperative *-ta*. However, it remains clear that aspect here overrides tense" (Svahn 2007:23).

However, in view of the integration of imperative *-ta* in a more complex diachronic and cross-linguistic perspective (as detailed in chapters 3 and 4), it is attractive to look upon imperative *-ta* as being expressed through a "perfective-completive" manifestation of

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<sup>15</sup> as in, for example: *Itai yo!* 'It hurts, I tell you!'

fossilized aspect rather than through perfect aspect. Soga (1983:25) states that perfective aspect is most often, but not always, associated with a notion of completion of the action described, citing examples from Japanese such as *Shinu tokoro da* ‘He is about to die’ and *Itsu yomihajimeru ka* ‘When will (you) start reading?’ as demonstrating the use of perfective verbs in a non-completive context. By adopting the moniker “perfective-completive” we clarify what is meant by the use of the term “perfective”, while remaining terminologically compatible with most uses of the terms “perfective” and “completive” in the context of non-canonical imperatives. This makes for a more coherent description of the phenomenon and allows for an easier integration into the abovementioned framework.

For the purposes of the discussion, our view is as follows: The aspectual context of imperative *-ta* is that of a “perfective-completive”. An action is viewed as bounded and complete(d), but not necessarily relevant to a current event as in the case of the perfect. Future references to the form as “perfective” are to be interpreted in this sense. Whether we regard the suffix *-tari* as expressing perfect (Sansom 1928), (Komai and Rohlich 1991), perfective (Shinzato 2005) or completive aspect (Soga 1983), it has to do with the completion of an action, and it is this function that is the aspectual basis for imperative *-ta*.

## 2.11 Conclusion

Imperative *-ta*, while at first seemingly an imperative using a past tense form, does not use a past tense form (the *-ta* suffix expressing instead “fossilized aspect”) nor can it be strictly called an imperative. The *-ta(ri)* suffix, when used in the nonpast *ta*-form constructions described, expresses a notion of perfective-completive aspect rather than past tense. From this is derived a modal function, expressing certainty in the imminent realization of a situation: advance *-ta*. A speaker may encourage a hearer to realize such a situation through use of “advance *-ta* by proxy”: imperative *-ta*. A comparison of imperative *-ta* with various imperative constructions in Japanese is thus somewhat beside the point, as it relates more directly to other modal constructions using aspect marking suffixes. Imperative *-ta* is only one of various modal constructions using the past and nonpast verbal suffixes in Japanese, and an analysis of just one of them separate from the whole does not serve to provide a full understanding of its function.

Nonetheless, our main focus is on imperative *-ta*. In the present thesis we explore the cross-linguistic perspective of the construction, as well as taking a deeper look at its history. The discussion will in the following chapter focus on this cross-linguistic perspective.

## Chapter 3

### Perfective imperatives: a cross-linguistic overview

#### 3.1 Introduction

Previous research on the topic of perfective imperatives in Japanese having been summarized, we move on to an overview of similar constructions cross-linguistically, covering language families unrelated to Japanese. Examples of constructions involving the non-canonical use of past tense markers in a perfective context are enumerated. I am in line with the view, as expressed by Croft (2003:9), that no description of a language feature is complete without knowledge of its place in a cross-linguistic context, and the analysis is contrastive in that it compares each construction to imperative and advance *-ta* as described in the previous chapter. Thus we may learn which properties (if any) are common for past and perfective imperatives cross-linguistically, and specify the place of the Japanese perfective imperative in this broader category. Information on the diachronic origin of the constructions is also given, when available. It is hoped that this overview shall not only help to place imperative *-ta* in a greater context, but also bring some attention to an understudied field.<sup>16</sup>

The use of the perfective in a nonpast context is not unheard of cross-linguistically. Bybee, Perkins, and Pagliuca (1994:95) state that

In particular, perfectives have other, non-past, uses distinguishing them from simple pasts, which tend not to have other uses. In particular, perfectives may be used in future contexts [...] in Abkhaz and Baining [...] the otherwise perfective gram can also signal immediate future. Simple pasts, on the other hand, are not used outside past contexts [...]

The use of the term “perfective imperative” to describe the constructions found in this chapter is not ideal. Verbs that are inherently perfective can be used in a canonical imperative and still be termed “perfective imperatives”, although it is not the notion of perfectivity that is central to its interpretation as an order, but rather the discourse context, prosody, and/or the use of imperative markers.

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<sup>16</sup> For a brief discussion on the seeming aversion in linguistics to the topic of the use of past tense markers to indicate the certain future, see Tavangar and Amouzadeh (2006:99).

We must also be careful to distinguish between the range of possible uses of a marker of tense/aspect and the aspect expressed through the use of a certain verb (with its own lexical aspect or *aktionsart*) in a certain context. Most of the imperatives described here are expressed through the non-canonical use of a past tense marker in a perfective context, rather than being expressed by a perfective marker *per se*.

The reader will find that, belying the title of the chapter, many of the constructions found here do not express an order or request, but rather the near and certain future. The most common of these is what I shall refer to as the “I’m off!/let’s go!” use, in which a past/perfective form is used with verbs of movement (typically equivalents to English ‘go’) to convey said meaning.<sup>17</sup> These are included because of their similarities to advance *-ta*, the properties of which I consider important in analyzing its imperative cousin, in the sense that they express the imminent, certain, and/or desired future. I have proceeded with the attitude, expressed in chapter 2, that “Imperative *-ta* is only one of various modal constructions using the past and nonpast verbal suffixes in Japanese, and an analysis of just one of them separate from the whole, [...] does not serve to provide a full understanding of its function”. Thus, the attempt to identify perfective imperatives in other languages has been in conjunction with the search for hortative and near-future uses of past tense or perfective markers. One can object that the range of constructions is too broad given the present topic, but this approach is not unwarranted, as perfective imperatives and other near-future uses may be viewed as subsets of a larger class of constructions involving **deictic projection**, a term coined by Lyons (1977) and employed in the present sense by Tavangar and Amouzadeh (2006). This subject shall be discussed in the following section.

I posit a typological generalization: Languages that employ the past/perfective to express the certain future are more likely to also express the imperative through their use than languages that do not. Conversely: if we, in a certain language, identify the use of a

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<sup>17</sup> A use of the past tense to indicate not the future, but the present is found in dialects of eastern Japan, as reported by Sandness (1999:219f), who refers to Konoshima (Toojo et al. 1961) as giving the following example: *Ita ka. Ita.* ‘Are you there? I’m here’. There are other mentions in the literature of *ita* being a northeastern equivalent to Kanto *iru* and Kansai *oru*. Burch (2005:3) refers to a dialect map by Sato (1979:11). Sandness draws an interesting parallel to older usages (1999:220):

A look back at the literary Japanese of the Kamakura and Muromachi periods [...] shows that both *wiru/woru* ‘sit, be located’ and *ku* ‘come’ often appeared in their *-tari* forms *witari* and *kitari*, even when a present state was being referred to, perhaps because of a feeling that these verbs were inherently resultative.

past/perfective marker as an imperative, chances are high that we shall also find uses of the past/perfective to express the certain future.

When interviewing informants and experts on the various languages, I have generally used a series of questions based on the data gathered in my previous thesis. The questions are intended to provide information on the grammatical and sociopragmatic properties of the constructions, more specifically, on how they compare to imperative and advance *-ta* in Japanese. Each main question is followed by examples of the various follow-up questions used to give more specific information.

1. What is the **level of formality** of the construction? Who do you address using the construction?
2. Under what **circumstances** is the construction normally used? When giving orders, or indirect requests? Do you have to be in a hurry? How long need it take until the action must be carried out?
3. What **verbs** can be used? Are there restrictions to the lexical aspect of the words that may be used? How productive is the construction?
4. How **complex** are the utterances that may be produced using this expression? Can the construction only consist of a one-word phrase, or can you form longer statements?
5. What **emotional state** in the speaker is associated with the use of the construction?

Since the constructions differ in their properties, not all questions apply to all languages. For instance, the Polish construction is only attested as a one word utterance formed from a specific verb. Every imperative construction has its properties summarized in a table at the end of the relevant subchapter.

After this overview, there follows a discussion of languages lacking a distinct imperative construction using the past tense/perfective, but whose speakers nonetheless may refer to future or current events through the use of past tense and/or perfective markers.

We will now have an overview of two concepts that are useful in understanding non-canonical uses of tense and aspect; deixis, and deictic projection.

### 3.2 Deictic projection: the past as certain future

The concept of **deixis** refers to expressions that change their objects of reference depending on contextual factors, such as the words "I" (personal deixis), "here" (spatial deixis) and "now" (temporal deixis). Deictic expressions such as these have a **deictic center**, an anchorage point (to use Levinson's term) from which their use is oriented. Levinson (1983:64) lists three properties of said center that are relevant to the discussion: "(i) the central person is the speaker, (ii) the central time is the time at which the speaker produces the utterance, (iii) the central place is the speaker's location at utterance time [...]". He goes on to speak of deictic projection as "[...] usages, in which deictic expressions are used in ways that shift [the] deictic centre to other participants [...]".

The term "deictic projection" was coined by Lyons (1977:579), who uses it in the context of occasions when the two parties in a conversation are distant in terms of space and time. The speaker then has the option of using the addressee's location as the deictic center instead of his own location (which is the default), thus "project[ing] himself into the spatiotemporal location of the addressee." Lyons uses the example of a phone call to illustrate the phenomenon. Someone who is in London, speaking with a friend in New York, can say either *We are **going** to New York next week* or *We are **coming** to New York next week*. In the case of the second sentence, the deictic center governing the use of the verbs "come" and "go" has shifted to the location of the addressee, namely New York. The projection thus involves property (iii) as defined by Levinson.

Levinson (1983:64) states that Fillmore (1975) discussed the same phenomenon as Lyons but referred to it as shifts in points of view. The references to "shift of viewpoint" found in Soga's (1983:66ff) description of the function of advance and imperative *-ta* also concern deictic projection, although the term itself is not used.

In their 2006 article *Deictic projection: An enquiry into the future-oriented past tense in Persian*, Manoochehr Tavangar and Mohammad Amouzadeh use the term in a different context from Lyons, focusing on temporal rather than spatial deixis. They draw on examples such as the following Swedish sentence

- (1) (Kom) så gick vi.  
 come-IMP so go-PAST we  
 ‘We are off now.’ (Tavangar and Amouzaheh 2006:98)

to demonstrate the use of the past tense in expressing the occurrence of future events, and explain that although temporal deixis has been exhaustively studied, the “future-oriented past tense” that they are focusing on is different in nature (2006:98).

In sharp contrast to those cases where the projected past is used to express such concepts as supposition [or] tentativeness [...] the version under study is characterized by its implications of factivity. In other words, *future events, states or processes are envisaged as having already materialized* [my emphasis] [...] although the future as such is not observable, [...] we are enabled, through metaphorization, to observe it by attributing to it an intrinsic property associated with the past: certainty of occurrence.<sup>18</sup>

This description corresponds well to the statement made by Teramura (1982:341) that the speaker of an imperative *-ta* sentence “presents the information to the hearer as something that has already become reality” (my trans). The authors explain that this manifestation of deictic projection is found in many languages other than Persian, listing examples from Swedish, Russian, Turkish, Persian, Kurdish and Arabic (2006:98f). We shall return to some of those examples later. However, they also assert that the phenomenon has been ignored in the literature (2006:99), a statement which seems fair when considering the often minimal descriptions available of the phenomena described in this chapter.

Tavangar and Amouzadeh adopt Reichenbach’s (1947:288) notions of Speech Time, Event Time and Reference Time<sup>19</sup> in explaining deictic projection in Persian (2006:103).

The concept of deictic projection involves a drastic change in the ordering relations associated with past time, thus constituting a deviation from the norm. That is to say, past events are projected into future so that we end up with the configuration S – R, E, rather than E, R – S.

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<sup>18</sup> We can compare this to cases when the uncertainty of the future is projected into the present, as in Spanish *Serán las tres* ‘It should be three o’ clock’ (lit). ‘It shall be three o’ clock’. Lars Larm (personal communication) contributes an example from English: “That will be the mailman”.

<sup>19</sup> In Reichenbach’s (1947) terminology as commonly adopted, Speech Time (S) is the moment of speech, Event Time (E) is the moment in which the event described in the utterance occurs, and Reference Time (R) is the temporal vantage point from which the event is viewed. Reichenbach referred to them as “point of speech”, “point of the event”, and “point of reference” (1947:288). Using this scheme, the main simple tenses of English may be summed up as follows: Present: S, R, E. Past: R,E - S. Future: S - R,E (1947:290).

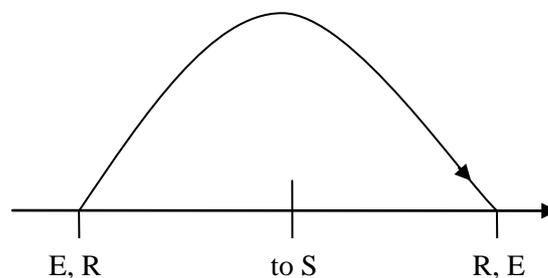
They describe the constructions involving deictic projection in Persian as

1. “Build[ing] on the asymmetry between pastness and futurity”,
2. Expressing certainty that future events will occur, and
3. Being stylistically different from normal use of the past tense (2006:100).

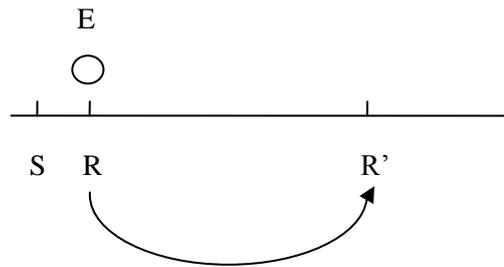
On the topic of this asymmetry, they state that it is related to ontological differences between the general conception of past and future (2006:107). They cite various scholars (Jespersen 1924, Comrie 1985, Ultan 1972) in support of the association of the future with uncertainty, as opposed to the past, and conclude that:

[...] it can be demonstrated that, contrary to our expectations, the future is not a symmetric counterpart of the past. As a result, the immutability, totality, and *boundedness* [my emphasis] characteristic of the past tense make it more eligible for future reference in contexts where a high degree of certainty of occurrence is required.

The authors then provide the following figure to explain the temporal change of perspective seen in deictic projection in Persian (adapted from Tavangar and Amouzadeh (2006:108):



Compare this to Soga’s Reichenbachian diagram of imperative *-ta* (1983:68). The circle denotes punctuality (as opposed to durativity).



Here, R is the immediate future time point at which [the action that the speaker wants the hearer to perform] should take place, and R' is a psychological future reference time when the hearer is supposed to be in the state of having completed E. (Soga 1983:68)

In both cases the final result is S - R,E, although Soga takes it one step further: the difference between the real and the “projected future” as seen in imperative *-ta* can, using the concept of “psychological future reference time” be expressed as the difference between S - R, E and S - R, E - R'.

The exact mechanism of how the past tense is substituted for the future is not wholly elucidated in the course of their article, although they stress the importance of socio-pragmatic factors in the process and conclude that these will likely vary depending on the language (2006:118). The authors also connect the concept of temporal deictic projection to notions of speech acts and modality, and in a later article (2009) continue to describe the non-canonical uses of Persian past tense in connection with subjective epistemic and deontic modality. Those desiring a fuller account are advised to read the articles. Moving along, this conception of the interaction between past and future provides us with a perspective from which to consider the various uses of the past/perfective that we shall now examine.

### 3.3 German

The first construction to be examined is the one found in German. The construction is often perceived as rude and abrupt in tone, and is in this respect similar to its Japanese counterpart. The canonical user of the construction would be a teacher or military officer giving orders to pupils or subordinates.

- (2) Still ge-blieb-en!  
 Quiet PTCP-keep-PTCP  
 ‘Keep quiet!’ (lit. ‘[has]Kept quiet!’)

- (3) Still ge-stand-en!  
 Still PTCP-stand-PTCP  
 ‘Stand still!’ (lit. ‘[has]Stood still!’)
- (4) Maul ge-halt-en!  
 Mouth PTCP-hold-PTCP  
 ‘Shut up!’ (lit. ‘[has]Held mouth!’)

Although similarities of usage exist, the two constructions are quite differently derived morphologically. While imperative *-ta* is formed using a suffix of tense/aspect, the German construction is formed using an infinite verb form, the *Partizip II* or past participle. Despite its English name, this participle is typically combined with auxiliary verbs to express the notion of perfect aspect<sup>20</sup> (compare English “has kept”, “has stood”) and can also express the passive (compare English “was kept”). The verbs used to form the perfect are the auxiliary *haben* ‘to have’ and the copular verb *sein* ‘to be’. The copula *werden* ‘to become’ is used to form the passive (Sven Osterkamp, personal communication).

One German grammar of Japanese has directly compared imperative *-ta* to the imperative use of the past participle, using the familiar Japanese phrases *Doita doita!* ‘Out of the way!’ and *Chotto matta!* ‘Wait a moment!’ as examples. The German equivalents given are as follows:

- (5) (Aus dem Weg) ge-gang-en!  
 Out.of the way PTCP-go-PTCP  
 ‘Out of the way!’ (lit. [has]Gone out of the way!’) (Rickmeyer 1995:85)
- (6) Hier ge-blieb-en!  
 Here PTCP-stay-PTCP  
 ‘Wait here!’ (lit. [has]Stayed here!’) (Rickmeyer 1995:85)

Since the two constructions exist within the framework of the highly different syntactic structures of Japanese and German, it would not be reasonable to expect that they, despite their similarities in the use of aspect and their connotations of rudeness, abruptness, and social superiority on the part of the speaker, should also have syntactic properties in common. For

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<sup>20</sup> The use of the perfect need not be incompatible with the idea of a category of perfective imperatives. As Soga (1983:23) notes, the perfect is associated with the notion of completion, the crucial factor in imperative *-ta*.

example, iteration of the verb (see chapter 2), a prominent feature of imperative *-ta*, does not occur in the *Partizip II* imperative.

Imperative *-ta*, which at first may be interpreted as a preterite form, is, as previously explained, derived from the use of perfective-completive aspect. The *Partizip II* imperative, on the other hand, while at first similar to the Japanese in its pragmatic connotations and use of a perfect form, might on further examination be revealed not to use a perfect form at all. Thomas Gross (personal communication) has suggested that the *Partizip II* imperative is a remnant of a larger sentence structure possibly originally constituting a passive with continuity of mood. He estimates the possible date of its emergence to around the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. Sven Osterkamp (personal communication) confirms that the origin of the construction in a passive rather than in a perfect is the view of at least one German reference grammar, Griesbach's *Neue deutsche Grammatik*.<sup>21</sup>

As the *Partizip II* is semantically ambiguous between perfect and passive if not combined with an auxiliary or copular verb, the precise origin of the construction (when used in an abbreviated form such as the imperative) is not obviously apparent to modern day speakers of German. I am not currently aware of any historical data directly supporting the view that it originated as a passive, but I do believe that based on available evidence, the construction in its synchronic form may be viewed as employing perfect aspect to express certainty in a manner similar to imperative *-ta*. The fact that modern day speakers of German have described its function as resembling imperative *-ta*<sup>22</sup> indicates that the construction may be interpreted as a perfect rather than a passive.

German, under some circumstances, also allows the expression of orders through the use of the present tense and the infinitive. We may draw a parallel to the Japanese *-ru* and *-ru koto* in an imperative context. In the interest of brevity, these constructions shall not be discussed here. However, their presence does indicate that German employs various non-canonical imperative forms<sup>23</sup>, as in Japanese, which may give a context for the *Partizip II* imperative. The use of a (possible) aspectual marker as an imperative is thus not the only way in which German resembles Japanese on this point.

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<sup>21</sup> As the copy available in the Lund University library has been lost, I am at present unable to consult this work.

<sup>22</sup> Rickmeyer (1995:85), discussing imperative *-ta*, states that "The event one wants to happen is worded as if it had already happened (resembles the usage of the Participle II in German)". Translation by Sven Osterkamp.

<sup>23</sup> Longer, polite circumlocutions are used in both Japanese and German to express requests, but they are not discussed here.

A summary of the *Partizip II* imperative as evaluated from the criteria established in the introduction may be presented as follows.

<b>Level of formality</b>	Rude, abrupt
<b>Circumstances</b>	Often used in orders to pupils, subordinates
<b>Verbs</b>	Typically used with movement verbs, other uses are possible
<b>Complexity of utterance</b>	Typically low
<b>Emotional state</b>	Often used in anger

We now move on to two languages in which the inherent aspectual properties of verbs are very clearly marked; Russian and Polish.

### 3.4 Russian

The perfective imperative found in Russian enters the literature on imperative *-ta* through a mention by Shirota (1998:34), who states that it can be regarded as similar to the construction in Japanese. He uses the following example sentences:

- (7) Poše-1!<sup>24</sup>  
go-PAST-2SG  
'Go!' (lit. '[You] went!') (Shirota 1998:34)
- (8) Poš-li/ Poecha-li!  
go-PAST-1PL go-PAST-1PL  
'Let's go!' (lit. '[We] went!') (Shirota 1998:34)

as examples of the construction, translating them into Japanese as *Itta, itta*. 'Go!' and *Saa, shuppatsu!* 'Come on, let's go!' respectively.<sup>25</sup>

Johan Muskala (personal communication) provides more information on the phenomenon, referring to it as "quite peripheral in Russian" and stating that its use appears limited to two verbs of movement, *pojti* 'go, get going (on foot)' and *poechat'* 'go, leave (using some form of transportation)'.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Russian and Polish verbs are inflected for gender as well as for person and tense. To avoid unnecessary complexity, in the example sentences only masculine forms have been used.

<sup>25</sup> See chapter 4 for a discussion of the imperative use of nouns.

He believes the first person plural form of the verb to be the one most commonly used in this fashion, with the form *pošli* having a meaning similar to the English ‘Let’s go’ or ‘Come on’. This use might be considered more similar to a hortative than an imperative in the strict sense, as the speaker is also involved in the action proposed.

Muskala associates the use of the construction in the second person singular with situations in which the speaker is rudely ordering someone to go away (cf. Japanese *Itta itta!* or *Kaetta kaetta!*). When used in such a fashion, a pronoun is often used to explicitly denote the referent. The sentence thus becomes:

- (9) Poše-1            ty!  
go-PAST-2SG you  
‘Go!’ (lit. ‘You went!’)

This sentence can, however, be viewed as a contraction of a longer (and ruder) expression.

- (10) Poše-1            ty    ná chuj!  
go-PAST-2SG you to penis-ACC  
‘Go to hell!’ (lit. ‘You went to [the] penis!’)

An example from Antonenko (2006) shows that the past tense imperative use of *pojti* with the destination explicitly marked is not limited to this fixed idiom alone. It can also encompass physical destinations in the real world. The translation is the one given by Antonenko, and does not indicate the rudeness demonstrated in the previous example.

- (11) Poše-1            by    ty    v    kino!  
go-PAST-2SG PRT you to cinema-ACC  
‘Why don’t you go to the movies?’ (Antonenko 2006:9)

The particle *by* following the verb can serve as a marker of subjunctive mood. The relationship between the construction and the subjunctive is discussed below. The same verb form (ignoring the presence/absence of *by* for the moment) can also be applied to referents in the third person. The referents are presumably not present at the time of speaking.

- (12) Poše-l                    on! / Poš-li                    oni!  
 go-PAST-3SG he go-PAST-3PL they  
 'He/They can go to hell!' (lit. 'He/They went!')

All the above mentioned examples use the verb *pojti*, and Muskala states that *poechat'*, when forming a preterite imperative, is only used in the plural. The *Poechali!* of (8) is translated by him as 'Now let's get going!/Get going!'.

Related to the imperative use is the "Let's go!" use. Both the verbs *pojti* and *poechat'* may in the preterite tense be used in their first person singular or plural forms to announce one's imminent departure.

- (13) Ja poše-l! /                    My poš-li!  
 I go-PAST-1SG we go-PAST-1PL  
 'I'm/We're going!' (lit. 'I/We went!')

- (14) Ja poecha-l! /                    My poecha-li!  
 I go-PAST-1SG we go-PAST-1PL  
 'I'm/We're going!' (lit. 'I/We went!')

Muskala does not regard the function as hortative or "marked" when the verbs are used in such a manner, simply as the standard idiomatic way of expressing that one is leaving now. He further states that he believes a plausible diachronic origin of the construction to be a subordinate clause expressing a wish<sup>26</sup> with the main clause and subordinating conjunction deleted. The subjunctive form of the verb used in such clauses would be morphologically identical to the preterite form, the process of abbreviation leaving behind a construction indistinguishable from the preterite. The particle *by* often follows the verb in subjunctive mood, and would presumably help to distinguish it from the preterite. In all but one of the examples given above it is absent. The example in which it is present is, however, listed by Antonenko as an imperative and not a subjunctive. If we accept this hypothesis, the situation in Russian can be considered to be similar to that in German in that the origin of a seemingly tense/aspect-related imperative can be shown to be historically derived from an unrelated inflectional category.

Even if the suffixes used can be shown to derive from the conjunctive rather than the preterite, the verbs involved are still clearly marked as being perfective in their inherent

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<sup>26</sup> The sentence would have a structure resembling the English 'I hope he goes to hell!' with *goes* inflected in the subjunctive mood. Cf. 'I wish that he *were* gone'.

aspect, and in this respect the Russian construction remains comparable to its equivalent in Japanese. Shirota (1998) is thus correct in considering them similar, although it can be concluded that such similarity is related more to the aspect of the verbs involved than the precise nature of the "non-imperative" suffixes used to express the command.

<b>Level of formality</b>	Rude but not necessarily so, see (11)
<b>Circumstances</b>	"Go away", but also less rude uses
<b>Verbs</b>	Typically used with perfective movement verbs <i>pojti</i> and <i>poechat'</i>
<b>Complexity of utterance</b>	Typically low, but variable
<b>Emotional state</b>	May be used in anger, other uses are possible

### 3.5 Polish

We shall now examine a similar construction in Polish. According to the informant, the construction is not productive, and is only seen in the use of one verb, the verb *pójść* 'go'. The verb is perfective, being derived from the imperfective *ić* 'go' with the prefix *po-* signifying perfective aspect. As is typical of Slavic languages, in Polish the distinction between perfective and imperfective verbs is clearly marked, and that a verb inflected for past tense and used as an imperative should be inherently perfective is in line with what has previously been stated on the topic (see chapter introduction). The construction is, similarly to its equivalents in Japanese and German, perceived as abrupt and rude, and the informant states that it is typically only used when addressing animals such as dogs, for example when one wants an annoying pet to leave the room. That a verb signifying "go" should be used is also in line with expectations based on Japanese; the verb is a voluntary motion verb similar to *doku* 'move out of the way', *iku* 'go', *kaeru* 'go home' and other verbs used with imperative -*ta*.

Unlike verbs in Japanese, Polish verbs are inflected for person and number. This is true in the imperative as well as in the indicative mood. A command addressed to a single listener is thus conjugated in second person singular, as in the example below:

- (15) Pój-dź!  
go-IMP-2SG  
'Go!'

Interestingly, the past tense imperative (the term "perfective imperative" will not be used when describing Polish, as the term as normally used applies equally to all imperatives formed from a verb marked as perfective) is not marked as second person, but rather as third. The past tense imperative form is thus

- (16) Poszed-ł!  
go-PAST-3SG  
'Go!' (lit. 'Went!')

and not, for instance,

- (17) \*Poszed-łeś!  
go-PAST-2SG  
'Go!' (lit. 'You went!')

Unlike in German, the Polish informant cannot conceive of the lone verb of the past tense imperative as being a synchronic remnant of a larger construction, the reason for this being that in Polish, one may choose to address others using the third person as a way of expressing politeness (cf. the Spanish use of the third person while using the polite pronoun *Usted*). If the past tense imperative were a remnant of a larger construction any sentences formed using it would have been interpreted as polite through the use of the third person. Since this does not correspond to the rudeness expressed by the construction in modern Polish, any previous use of the past tense imperative beyond the single word stage seems unlikely. This, however, does not mean that the past tense imperative was not previously used with verbs other than *pójść*, as in Russian. Dorota Tubielewicz Mattsson (personal communication) judges the construction to be a Russicism, and states that the use of verbs other than *pójść* may be theoretically possible but extremely rare.<sup>27</sup>

As an alternative explanation for the apparent conjugational mismatch, I tentatively suggest that the seemingly third person imperative may be a contraction of *Gdyś poszedł* 'You

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<sup>27</sup> This may be roughly compared with *Enzetsu shita shita!* 'Hold a speech!' and similar uses of imperative *-ta*, that are possible but most likely not seen in practice.

went' which is a second person form. Perhaps in the absence of *gdys* it may be interpreted as third person in nature. However, this is speculative. Polish also exhibits a "Let's go!" use of *pójsć*:

- (18) Poszli-śmy!  
go-PAST-1PL  
'Let's go!' (lit. 'We went!')

The properties of the Polish imperative may be summarized as follows.

<b>Level of formality</b>	Very rude, pejorative
<b>Circumstances</b>	"Go away" exclusively
<b>Verbs</b>	Restricted to perfective verb of movement, <i>pójsć</i>
<b>Complexity of utterance</b>	One word expression
<b>Emotional state</b>	Used in anger

### 3.6 Persian

Persian exhibits a variety of future-related uses of past tense forms, some of which are similar to advance *-ta*. In everyday spoken language<sup>28</sup>, the past tense form of a verb may in Persian be used to express that the eventual realization of an action is so certain as to be taken for granted. As we shall see, the characteristics of the construction are similar enough to those of its Japanese equivalent as to merit its being included in the ongoing discussion.

If the person whom you are speaking with bores you, or if you are busy and wish to show that you will be leaving very soon, in Persian you may say the following:<sup>29</sup>

- (19) Mæn ræft-æm!  
I go-PAST-1SG  
'I'm going!' (lit. 'I went.')

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<sup>28</sup> Tavangar and Amouzaheh (2006:115) state that "Pragmatically speaking, [...] deictic projection [in Persian] is tied inseparably to informal contexts".

<sup>29</sup> Sentence elicited from my informant, but found in Tavangar and Amouzadeh (2006:98) as well.

Alternatively, if someone has baked a cake and you wish to announce that you plan on eating it within the next couple of hours, you may say;

- (20) Mæn xord-æm!  
I eat-PAST-1SG  
'Consider it eaten' (lit. 'I ate [it].')

According to the informant, the construction is quite productive and may be used with a large range of verbs, to the point where it can be described as more generally used than Japanese advance or imperative *-ta*.

The construction is quite flexible as to regarding the certain future which it expresses, having a timescale ranging from the immediate future up to several hours or more. It also contains a certain amount of emotional force, serving to strengthen a statement in the manner of English "I will do X for sure", or "You'd better believe that I'm going to X!" In a salacious example provided by the informant, a young man may attempt to convince a friend of the inevitability of his impending romantic conquest by exclaiming (the Persian equivalent of) "I slept with her!", although this has not yet, or might indeed never come to pass. In a less exiting context, one friend might assure another of his intellectual prowess by saying "I passed it" while referring to the test that he will take the following day.

In the following example, a supporter of a sports team is expressing certainty that his team will surely lose, although the match may not be over for quite some time.

- (21) Ma bāxt-im!  
we lose-PAST-1SG  
'We're going to lose!' (lit. 'We lost!')

The sentence may be compared with its Japanese equivalent, as seen in chapter 2:

- (22) Make-ta, make-ta!  
lose-PAST lose-PAST  
'Oh no, (we) are going to lose!' (lit. 'We have lost!')

The construction is similar to advance *-ta*, although the informant states that there is no construction in Persian which an order is given through the use of the past tense.

However, we shall now consider the following example sentences from Tavangar and Amouzadeh (2009:861, 868). In the examples, speaker A is addressing speaker B.

- (23) A: Mitun-æm ber-æm birun ye dæqiqe?  
 IMPF.can.1SG SUBJ.go.1SG out one minute  
 ‘Can I go out for a minute?’
- (24) B: Ræf-ti-yo zud bærgæš-ti-ya.  
 go-PAST.2SG-and quick return-PAST.2SG-DP  
 ‘Go and come back quickly.’ (lit. ‘Went and came back quickly.’)
- (25) A: Miše ber-æm ab + boxor-æm?<sup>30</sup>  
 IMPF.become.3SG SUBJ.go.1SG water + SUBJ.eat.1SG  
 ‘Can I go and drink (some) water?’
- (26) B: Xor-di-yo zud umæ-di.  
 eat-PAST.2SG-and quickly come-PAST.2SG  
 ‘You may drink and come back quickly.’ (lit. ‘Ate<sup>31</sup> and came back quickly.’)

The authors refer to this as “the deontic past tense expressing a direct order” (2009:868), and explain that the first verb in (24) expresses a notion of permission, while the second constitutes an order. Both are stated to be examples of the use of the past tense to express subjective deontic modality. Although the view that orders (and the often overlapping category of imperatives) are examples of subjective deontic modality is common, in a specifically Japanese context we may compare this with Larm’s (2006:180-186) classification of the *-e (ro)* imperative as a deontic expression of extreme subjectivity. Presumably the *-ta* imperative can also be classified under this heading.

Further, Tavangar and Amouzadeh state that past tense uses of this type are restricted to perfective contexts (2006:114), and that “the verb types which can occur in the encoding pattern underlying B’s utterance in [(24)] are prone to heavy constraints: stative and inchoative verbs are definitely unacceptable” (2009:869). This sounds encouragingly similar to the restrictions that apply to imperative *-ta*, as previously outlined in chapter 2. Although the authors view the phenomenon of deictic projection as being driven by past tense in Persian, their statements on this matter lend further support to a view of the phenomenon as being connected to perfective aspect.

<sup>30</sup> The plus sign divides the elements of a compound verb.

<sup>31</sup> The verb *xordæn* corresponds to both the English “eat” and “drink.”

Finally, as in Japanese (Soga 1983:68), the final verb is marked by higher (in Persian, rising) pitch (2009:896).

However, I have not been able to locate any information about the past tense imperative outside this echoic context, and we conclude that although the non-canonical use of past tense and perfective aspect to express the certain future is richly attested in Persian, this is not the case for imperatives. The summary is as follows:

<b>Level of formality</b>	Informal
<b>Circumstances</b>	Echoic context (but related to more productive constructions)
<b>Verbs</b>	Perfective verbs
<b>Complexity of utterance</b>	Presumably restricted to echoic context
<b>Emotional state</b>	Data deficient

### 3.7 Mandarin Chinese

We shall here discuss the occurrence of Mandarin Chinese *le* in imperatives displaying positive and negative polarity.

First, some background is needed. Verbal *le* in Mandarin Chinese may be broadly classified as expressing a notion of perfectivity. It is contrasted with sentence final *le*, which has a use closer to the perfect or resultative (Dahl 1985, referring to Li and Thompson 1982). However, caution is advised when discussing *le*, as many attempts have been made at defining its exact function. Furthermore, these definitions have often been vague. Ljungqvist Arin (2003:vii, emphasis in original) states that "...while the majority of papers written on aspect in Chinese state that verbal *le* expresses perfective aspect, since there is no agreement among the authors on what perfective aspect actually **means**, the reader is still left in confusion." She explains the function of *le* through a relevance-theoretic account that, while meritorious, is beyond the scope of the present thesis.<sup>32</sup> We conclude that although its use is complex, *le* does often express events that correspond to perfective aspect, which makes it relevant to the discussion.

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<sup>32</sup> For a comprehensive description of *le*, see Ljungqvist Arin (2003).

Ross and Sheng Ma (2006:328) state that Mandarin Chinese has no specific imperative form and that the verb itself may be used as an imperative, although the suffix *zhe* and the particle *ba* may also be used in some cases.

- (27) Chī!  
eat  
'Eat!'

Li and Thompson (1981:213) state that “[...] we find *le* in such nonpast perfective sentences as imperatives [...]”.<sup>33</sup>

- (28) Hē le nèi bēi yào!  
drink LE that cup medicine  
'Drink that cup of medicine!' (Li and Thompson 1981:207)

- (29) Kāi le tā!  
open LE it  
'Open it!' (Li and Thompson 1981:210)

They state that most imperative sentences are not formed using *le* (1981:207). Indeed, as grammaticality tests by the present author confirm, an imperative may not always be formed using *le*, and thus its use appears to be restricted to certain situations.

- (30) \*Chī le!  
eat LE  
(Intended to mean) 'Eat!'

Li and Thompson (1981:207) further state that “*-Le* can however, be used in imperatives where there is some urgency about the action taking place, especially when something is to be disposed of or gotten rid of”, using (28) as an example. The reference to urgency is encouraging in terms of a comparison to Japanese, although, as we shall see, this property of “imperative *le*” is not as salient as in imperative *-ta*.

There is a related construction in which the verb appears last in the sentence, and *le* expresses the request in conjunction with the particle *bǎ*. The use of *bǎ* (not only in conjunction with *le*) is referred to by Li and Thompson (1981:463) as “the *bǎ* construction”,

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<sup>33</sup> They also mention the use of *le* in statements about the future. Ljungqvist Arin (2003:25) adds that *le* can appear in future perfectives, but that its role is then modal and not temporal.

and although the details of its use are hard to pin down, they conclude that it is related to the concept of “disposal”<sup>34</sup> (1981:490), of being related to what happens to something (1981:483). Typically this “something” is the object of a transitive verb, as seen in the examples below:

(31) Bà nà<sup>35</sup> bēi yào hē le.  
 BA that cup medicine drink LE  
 ‘Drink that cup of medicine.’

(32) Bǎ bōlí cā le.  
 BA window clean LE  
 ‘Clean the window.’

Both constructions belong to the spoken register. It is the view of the informant that the *bǎ ...le* variety is used towards subordinates and intimates to remind them of things that should be done. Furthermore, there is a difference in nuance between the *le* and *bǎ ...le* constructions. The informant states that (28) is ambiguous between a statement about an action that has occurred and an order, while (31) is an order or a reminder for someone to drink their medicine. In any case, neither form exhibits the urgency constraint associated with imperative *-ta*.

(33) Míngtiān bǎ yào hē le.  
 tomorrow BA medicine drink LE  
 ‘Drink the medicine tomorrow.’

(34) Míngtiān hē le nà bēi yào.  
 tomorrow drink LE that cup medicine  
 ‘Drink that cup of medicine tomorrow.’

Further, unlike the relationship between imperative *-ta* and other commands, the addition of *le* seems to *soften* some orders, for instance;

(35) ?Hē nà bēi yào/ Hē le nà bēi yào.  
 drink that cup medicine / drink LE that cup medicine  
 ‘Drink that cup of medicine.’

<sup>34</sup> Not in the sense of discarding something. The term is here used in a sense corresponding to Japanese *atsukai*.

<sup>35</sup> The use of *nà* here is as given by the informant, and will be maintained in all subsequent examples.

The first version is unnatural, and sounds harsher than the one with *le*.

Regardless of its classification as a perfective use of *le*, the *bǎ ...le* imperative does not have the temporal restriction associated with imperative *-ta* (\**Gofun matta matta!* ‘Wait five minutes!’).

- (36) Yòng wǔ fēnzhōng bǎ yào hē le.  
Use five minute BA medicine drink LE  
‘Take five minutes to drink the medicine.’

Wu (2004:293) states that verbal *le* can only form an imperative in combination with 28 verbs listed by Lü (1980), and that “these verbs are the only verbs that can combine with *le* to give rise to a purely resultative (completive) interpretation.” Wu therefore views imperative *le* as expressing “inner completive aspect and not outer perfective aspect” (2004:293). The verbs listed by Lü are transitive, and beside the verbs already seen, include ‘break’, ‘throw’, ‘injure’, ‘kill’ etc. (2004: 300). However, despite the fact that *chī* ‘eat’ is on the list, it cannot be used on its own in a *le* imperative, as seen in (30). This indicates that more complex constraints than a restriction in verbal aspect are involved.

Li and Thompson (1981:210) state that *le* can also be used in a sentence of negative command. They explain that (emphasis in original) “There is one type of situation in which *le* must be used in a negative imperative [...] and that is when the imperative is a *warning* to the listener.”

- (37) Bié pèng le lúzi  
NIMP touch LE stove  
‘Don’t touch the stove!’ (Li and Thompson 1981:210)

On the topic of negative imperatives, Ross and Sheng Ma state that *bù yào*, *bié* or *bù xǔ* may be used to form them in modern Mandarin Chinese (2006:329). Li and Thompson (1981:211f) explain that (emphasis in original) “An event in a negative imperative by itself is not a likely candidate for a bounded, or *perfective*, event, since the speaker is actually urging that it not happen. Therefore, we should expect never to find *-le* in negative imperatives.”

They go on to explain that all uses of *le* as a warning (and in negative imperatives in general) involve an implicit or explicit consequence of the event described in the imperative sentence,

such as in “Don’t touch the stove *or you will burn your finger*”. This second clause is said to bound the imperative temporally; this is claimed by the authors to justify the existence of a perfective marker in such a context. “We see, then that the use of *-le* in warnings follows naturally from its use to signal the first event in a sequence.” (Li and Thompson 1981:212)

Arthur Holmer (personal communication) informs us of a variety of negative imperative using *le* that appears to be slightly different from the examples described by Li and Thompson, syntactically.

- (38) Bié dǎ wǒ le!  
 NIMP hit I LE  
 ‘Do not hit me!’

As the *le* employed in this construction does not follow the verb, we may surmise that we are dealing with the (non-perfective) sentence-final use of *le*. The regular *bù yào* way of saying ‘Do not hit me’ is:

- (39) Bù yào dǎ wǒ!  
 NIMP hit I  
 ‘Do not hit me!’

This is a stronger imperative than the *bié ... le* version. My informant states that the *bù yào* imperative is like an order and sounds very strong, while the *bié ... le* sentence is like a request and sounds softer. A *bù yào ... le* form is also possible, but with special connotations. When you have already told someone not to hit you, but they hit you again, you may say *Bù yào dǎ wǒ le!* ‘(I already told you) do not hit me!’ *Bù yào* negative imperatives can also be used with *le*. Examples include *Bù yào kū le* ‘Do not cry.’ *Bù yào chī le* ‘Do not eat.’ *Bù yào qù le* ‘Do not go.’

Li and Thompson’s statements (1981) as to the perfective nature of the *le* negative imperative if viewed as the manifestation of a conditional notwithstanding, the use of the construction does not resemble what we are used to seeing in perfective imperatives. This negative request is not bounded by the restriction of imperative *-ta* that the order be confined to the here and now.

- (40) Bù yào tiāntiān dǎ wǒ le.  
 NIMP every day hit I LE  
 ‘Do not hit me every day.’

- (41) Bù yào zǒngshì dǎ wǒ le.  
 NIMP always hit I LE  
 ‘Do not always hit me.’

Furthermore, it need not be restricted to verb-only, interjection-like utterances, which are the usual usage pattern for imperative *-ta* (although not its only possible use).

- (42) Bù yào yòng diànshuǐ hú zhǔ dōng xī le.  
 NIMP use electric kettle cook food LE  
 ‘Do not use the electric kettle to cook food.’

Neither the *bié* nor the *bù yào* negative imperatives have the temporal restrictions of imperative *-ta*.

- (43) Bié/ bù yào zàiděng wǔ fēnzhōng le  
 NIMP NIMP wait five minute LE  
 ‘Do not wait for five minutes.’

- (44) Bié/ bù yào zhěngtiān gōngzuò le  
 NIMP NIMP all day work LE  
 ‘Do not work all day.’

The lack of restrictions associated with perfective imperatives indicates that this construction does not employ said aspect in expressing an imperative. In addition, the position of *le* is sentence-final in all the attested imperatives, lending further support to this conclusion. In chapter 2 it was explained that a negative imperative *-ta* sentence could not be formed in Japanese, because of the requirement, as stated by Soga (1983:67) that the verb be complete in structure. Although this may in Japanese be motivated on morphological grounds, because of the adjectivistic (and thus imperfective) nature of negated verbs, the lack of perfective aspect in this negative imperative in Mandarin Chinese may point in the direction of a tendency for negative imperatives to be imperfective rather than perfective. Indeed, none of the perfective imperatives we have seen so far show examples of negative polarity. Whether this is because of a cross-linguistic restriction inherent to the constructions (an action that does not occur cannot be completed), or because statements with positive polarity come more

easily to mind among informants cannot currently be determined, and so emerges as a potential topic for future research.

However, there is some support for the negative-imperfective hypothesis in the literature. Terras (1960:336), writing about aspect and tense in Russian, states that (emphasis in original) “The negative (prohibitive) imperative is predominantly imperfective. Whenever the negative imperative of a perfective verb is used, it has the specific meaning of a warning [...] It is interesting to note that such usage has exact parallels in other IE languages.” Terras goes on to tell us that in classical Armenian and Greek, present tense imperatives are prohibitive while aorist (perfective) imperatives do not have this function. Compare this with Li and Thompson’s (1981:210) statements that the use of *le* is compulsive when using a negative imperative to express a warning in Chinese.

The *le* negative imperative in Mandarin Chinese has thus been proven to be dissimilar to the perfective imperatives previously described. Further, Ljungqvist Arin (2003:112) states that the function of *le* in imperative and modal contexts is not perfective but resultative. In any case, although the possible restriction to completive verbs in the case of positive polarity is interesting, the *le* imperative, when taken as a whole, does not easily fit into the larger category of past/perfective imperatives.

We will now move on to another use of *le* that is similar to constructions we have encountered earlier, for instance the Persian *Mæn ræftæm!* ‘I’m going’.

- (45) Wǒ zǒu le  
I go LE  
‘I’m off.’ (lit. ‘I have gone.’)

Ross and Sheng Ma (2006:237) refer to this as “Imminent occurrences and imminent change”, stating that “Sentence final *le* can be used to indicate that a situation will happen soon.”

- (46) Wǒmen kuài dào le  
We soon arrive LE  
‘We will be arriving soon.’ (Ross and Sheng Ma 2006:237)

However, no past tense hortative form as in Swedish (see 3.8.3) appears possible.

- (47) Wǒmen zǒu ba /\*le ba  
We go BA/ LE BA  
‘Let’s go.’

The following summary applies mainly to imperative utterances featuring verbal *le* and positive polarity.

<b>Level of formality</b>	Spoken language
<b>Circumstances</b>	Urgency, “getting rid of something”, other uses
<b>Verbs</b>	Restricted to group of 28 verbs expressing completive aspect
<b>Complexity of utterance</b>	Variable
<b>Emotional state</b>	Urgency, other contexts are possible

### 3.8. Related constructions

We shall now discuss other languages in which constructions with the past tense or perfective aspect referring to future events have been reported, often expressing the immediacy or inevitable nature of the event, as in Japanese advance *-ta*.

#### 3.8.1 Korean

Sven Osterkamp (personal communication) informs us of a style of utterance in Korean in which the past tense marker *-ess-* is used in a manner similar to the Japanese nonpast use of *-ta*. A train comes into sight, and shall arrive soon. The onlooker exclaims:

- (48) W-    *-ass-*<sup>36</sup>  *-e!*  
      come- PAST- DECL  
      ‘It’s coming!’ (lit. ‘[It] came!’)

As described by Osterkamp, the construction is similar to the Japanese *Aa, densha ga kita!* and similar utterances using *-ta* to express the near immediacy of a future event, or information that has recently entered into the awareness of the speaker.

As to the function of *-ess-*, Oh (2003) states that “The meaning that is most widely recognized both by the public and grammarians is the meaning of past tense”. Some references to *-ess-* as a perfective marker do exist, among them one by Park (1994:355) who refers to Nam (1978) as providing proof for this. I cannot find any attestation of a command

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<sup>36</sup> *-ass-* is here an allomorph of *-ess-*.

expressed though its use, but Martin (1993:305) cites CM (1:316-7)<sup>37</sup> as saying that the present in Korean is used for, among other things, command-like instructions, such as recipes or stage directions. This use is similar to the use of the *ru*-form in Japanese *Tatsu!* ‘Stand!’<sup>38</sup>, but I have found nothing on the Korean construction beyond this reference. However, Martin (1993:485) also refers to a description of Korean tense that explicitly mentions the near future use of *-ta* and the apparent lack of this use in Korean. “Pak Hwaca 1982 says that Korean does not use the past as a lively immediate future, so that the Japanese *Aa, basu ga kita* ‘Oh the bus is about to get here’ should be said as **Ppesu ka onta**<sup>39</sup>”.

The Pak Hwaca referred to by Martin is Park (1982:89-90), who states that the two languages are different on this point:

As for the use of tense in Japanese, there is not only the indication of real tense, but also the indications of aspect of completed and uncompleted actions. It is most useful to distinguish between the perfective verbs (the verbal suffix *-ta*) and the imperfective verbs (the verbal suffix *-(ru)*), but the present tense in Korean does not have the aspect of uncompleted actions, as is the case in Japanese. This constitutes a large difference between the two languages. The present tense in Japanese can indicate either the real present, the future, or uncompleted aspect.<sup>40</sup>

Park then gives the example already mentioned, and an example *Honya wa asoko datta ne*. ‘The book store is over there, right?’ that is also translated into the Korean present tense.

Because of the structural similarities between Korean and Japanese, as well as the proposed phylogenetic connection (see Martin 1991), it would be interesting to see that they also had aspectual-pragmatic properties in common. As it stands the situation is unclear, and more research is needed.

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<sup>37</sup> Full title is *Cosen-e munqpep. Phyengyang: Kwahak-wen en.e munhak yenkwu-so*. Vol. 1 of 2: *Eum-lon hyengthay-lon* (1960, repr. Tokyo 1961). (Korean Grammar. Pyongyang: Institute of Language and Literature. Vol. 1 of 2: Phonology, Morphology)

<sup>38</sup> Takagi (1999:72-73) has an interesting discussion about the use of the *-ru* form in Japanese while instructing someone in detail on how to perform a series of actions, using the same examples of stage directions and recipes. It is also mentioned by Yoshida (1971:243). Martin (1993:305) also mentions a reference in CM 1 to the use of the Korean present in “citing a series of actions”.

<sup>39</sup> ‘The bus comes.’ My trans. The formatting of example sentences follows the original.

<sup>40</sup> My trans.

### 3.8.2 Swedish

The following example from Swedish was first brought to my attention by a student of Japanese attending a lecture on imperative *-ta*, but is also found in Tavangar and Amouzadeh (2006:98), who have presumably taken it from Herriman (2000/2001).

- (49) (Kom) så gick vi.  
come-IMP so go-PAST we  
'We are off now.'

The construction functions as an informal hortative, and Tavangar and Amouzadeh describe it as an example of deictic projection. However, Lars-Åke Henningsson (personal communication) notes that another expression, *Kom så gack vi* 'Let's go' is also to be found. *Gack* is an obsolete imperative form of the verb *gå* 'walk, go'. The imperative form is in modern Swedish identical to the infinitive (*gå!*), but the older form might here have been reanalyzed as *gick* 'went' because of phonetic resemblance. This may be related to the clausal context, as it is not in a position where an imperative would be found in modern Swedish. The normative form of this expression is in modern Swedish *Kom så gå vi* 'Come on, let's go' where *går* is the present tense indicative of *gå* 'go'. In earlier Swedish, both verbs in sentences of this kind may have been inflected for imperative mood. The situation may be similar to that in Russian, in which a previously modal form (in the case of Russian a subjunctive) now appears as a seeming past tense imperative.

The original Swedish informant adds that the use of the construction is associated with a feeling of irritation and impatience, and mentions a further use: *Och så försvann du* 'And so you disappeared', said to be used when angrily wanting to end a conversation. It is possible that an originally imperative construction has been reanalyzed as a past tense form and has become productive among some speakers in the form of actual deictic projection.

Östen Dahl (personal communication) gives us an example of a possible past tense imperative in Swedish.

- (50) Herrskapet behaga-de sitta.  
Gentlemen please-PAST sit-INF  
'Please to sit down.' (lit. 'It pleased the gentlemen to sit down.')

This use of the verb *behaga* ‘please’ belongs to a polite register of Swedish that is now obsolete. The function is similar to the English use of *please* in “Would it please your Lordship to take his tea now?” and is also comparable to Japanese constructions involving the honorific verb *nasaru*. I have found examples of the construction in a humorous text from 1912. The context is the passing of a government decree on the compulsive wearing of bathing suits. Before the decree is read, the phrase *Herrskapet behagade resa sig* ‘Please rise’ is used. Afterwards, the author uses *Herrskapet behagade åter intaga sina platser* ‘Please return to your seats’ before carrying on in the mock style of an official protocol. The context reminds one of the English use of “All rise!” in courts, but the statement is not as direct as in English. Fleischman (1989:11), discussing the past tense as an indicator of social distance and politeness, states that “[...] distancing in the past serves to mitigate or even disguise the illocutionary force of certain assertive speech acts”. The past tense use of *behaga* might have such a function here. Note that in the mock protocol, a series of actions (rising and sitting) is being dictated in a fashion which may qualify as “stage directions”. The use of the past tense might here have a nuance similar to that of the present tense imperatives in Japanese and Korean as mentioned above, but more data is needed to confirm or deny such speculations.

As for other stylistically marked uses of the Swedish preterite, Collinder (1974:69) brings the following example to our attention.

- (51) Här va’ re damen utan underkropp!  
 Here was it lady-DEF without lower.body  
 ‘Come see the lady with no lower body!’ (lit. ‘Here it was the lady without [a] lower body.’)

This construction can also be used when the topic is inanimate, as in: *Här var det varmkorv!* ‘Come get your hot dogs!’ (lit. ‘Hot dogs were here!’). The speaker is attempting to draw attention to a product that they are selling or displaying, as in the case of *Katta katta!* or *Kaimasu!* (see chapter 5) in Japanese. In the case of (51) the context is that of a carnival. Unlike (50), this use of the preterite is informal in tone. Collinder states that the construction is a variety of the use of the Swedish preterite as an admirative, as in *Det var mig en praktfull smyrnamatta, vill jag lova!* ‘By my word, that is one fine Smyrna carpet!’ and that the intensity of emotion associated with the construction is used for the purpose of advertising (1974:69).

Lars-Åke Henningson (personal communication) suggests that the construction may have something to do with presupposition. When entering the carnival grounds (or similar

location with relevant features), the customer is assumed to already possess sufficient background knowledge about what attractions and products are available. The past tense use refers back to this presupposed knowledge and is used to confirm that, yes indeed, such a product can be found here.

### 3.8.3 Other languages

Tavangar and Amouzadeh (2006:99) provide examples of the “Let’s go!” use of past tense markers in various languages as examples of deictic projection. Their mentions of Swedish and Russian agree with the more thorough descriptions given here, but the examples from Turkish and Kurdish are worth showing. The glossing follows the original.

Turkish:

- (52) Manageddim.  
I went.1SG  
‘I am about to leave.’ (Tavangar and Amouzadeh 2006:99)

Kurdish:

- (53) Em çû’n.  
We went  
‘Let’s go.’ (Tavangar and Amouzadeh 2006:99)

Further, Bybee et al. (1994:212) state that the perfective forms are used as imperatives in Baining and Trukese. They also mention the use of the imperfective as an imperative in Danish and Tahitian, adding that in Danish the form used is the present.<sup>41</sup> In any case, the perfective is not the only marker of tense/aspect that may serve as an imperative.

The use of perfective forms to express commands or future events is not limited to living languages. Arne Jönsson (personal communication) notes that Latin exhibits a use of the perfect tense to express a negative command in urgent situations. The blanket statement *Ne furtum facias* ‘Thou shalt not steal’ is contrasted with the specific *Ne furtum feceris* ‘Do

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<sup>12</sup> Present tense imperatives have already been mentioned in German, but they are also found in Swedish: *Han tiger!* ‘You be quiet!’ (lit. ‘He hushes!’) This construction shows similarity to the *-ru* imperative: *Tatsu!* ‘Stand!’ Connotations of authority and sternness are present both in Swedish and Japanese, but the particulars of the constructions are likely different; the Swedish construction is perceived as old-fashioned by a male informant in his 50s, while its Japanese counterpart is widely used in schools, etc. See Takagi (1999:72-73) for details on the latter.

not steal (my things)’. In the latter sentence the verb *facere* ‘do’ is in the perfect subjunctive. The statement is uttered, for example, when a thief has his hand in one’s pocket. Ola Wikander adds that in Classical Hebrew perfective aspect can refer to the future, and may also be used when giving an order.

As a final aside, the author notes the presence of a pragmatic use of “yesterday” corresponding to the “Let’s go!” past tense use in English. In a comic book, two hoodlums are fleeing the scene, when one of them exclaims “We left yesterday!” Finally, a Google search for the expression “I want it done yesterday!” brings up more than 5000 hits.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

In this chapter we observed cross-linguistic examples of the role of past tense and perfective aspect in creating imperatives, “Let’s go!” constructions, and other expressions relating to the certain future. To summarize the findings, some usage characteristics and features are shared by various languages (such as perfectivity, urgency and informality), while others are idiosyncratic, as for instance, the echoic nature of the Persian past tense imperative.

Japanese, Russian, Polish and Chinese all display past/perfective imperatives along with other nonpast uses of past or perfective suffixes, often of the “Let’s go!” kind involving verbs of movement. Persian and Swedish display nonpast uses of various kinds, but their imperativistic past tense constructions are not as clear-cut as in the previous languages. German has an imperative using an (arguably) perfect gram, but does not employ the advance *-ta*-like uses seen in the other languages. It does, however, have other imperativistic constructions which can possibly be compared with those of Japanese. Finally, Korean possibly has neither.

There are reservations to be made about the findings of this brief survey. Firstly, the extent to which the usages described are conventionalized and regarded as part of the grammar of the language, as opposed to occasional pragmatic usages, may vary considerably. To exemplify; while the Persian and Japanese constructions are productive, the Polish and Russian ones are peripheral, and (49) and (50) from Swedish are not part of the native competence of the author. Secondly, most of the imperative constructions involved may possibly be traced back to forms which originally did not express the past tense, such as German (a passive) Russian (subjunctive) Polish (usage copied from Russian), Japanese

(‘fossilized aspect’) and Swedish (a “Let’s go!” use, but this time an imperative).<sup>42</sup> If we can explain the usage of these constructions in their modern form by referring to an earlier use unrelated to tense, what is there to say about the phenomenon of deictic projection in unifying them cross-linguistically?

The case might be made that regardless of the diachrony of the construction, in its present use it is analyzed as a past tense form and can thus be regarded as an example of deictic projection. This is not a convincing argument, unless the construction can be proven to be synchronically productive and perceived as a use of the past tense by speakers. Possibly this is the case in Swedish. Nonetheless, it seems to me that the co-occurrence of past tense/perfective imperatives and “Let’s go!” or other non-canonical uses indicating certain future in most of the languages examined indicates some sort of connection. Unless all non-imperative usages may convincingly be dismissed as remnants of former markers of mood, this will remain my position. As it stands, few of the so-called “past tense imperatives” described here seem to derive originally from markers of past tense. What unifies them is the perfective/completive aspect of the verbs involved in conjunction with a marker of past tense/perfective aspect<sup>43</sup>, and thus the main title of the present chapter, “Perfective imperatives”, can be said to be justified.

However, a problem with this view is that brusque, hurried orders might tend towards perfective utterances (“Wait up!” as opposed to “Wait one hour!”) and that we may be looking at a distribution of verbal aspect governed by circumstances rather than restrictions inherent to the constructions. This may vary depending on the language, and more detailed surveys of those constructions productive enough to enable grammaticality testing would be helpful in determining this.

Finally, the sample pool of languages is too small to enable any valid generalizations as to the relation between perfective imperatives and past tense markers expressing the certain future. There might well be many languages that have the latter but not the former (Tavangar and Amouzadeh (2006) refer to deictic projection as a possible language universal), and some that have the former but not the latter. Consequently the generalization put forth in the beginning of this chapter requires a cross-linguistic survey on a far larger scale before it can be corroborated, although I remain optimistic about its validity. Such a survey is not possible

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<sup>42</sup> As for Chinese, there are interpretations of the *le* imperative as either perfective, completive, or resultative in aspect (see section 3.7).

<sup>43</sup> Or perfect aspect in the case of German.

within the scope of the present discussion, but the brief overview presented here may be regarded as a pilot study.<sup>44</sup> Having had a view of perfective imperatives in a cross-linguistic context, in the next chapter we return to the perfective imperative in Japanese, and a discussion of its diachronic origins.

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<sup>44</sup> Tavangar and Amouzadeh conclude their 2009 article by stating (2009:872): "One potential area which could be suggested for further research would be a cross-linguistic study of whether, and to what extent, the past tense is used in other languages to express subjective epistemic and deontic modality". The present survey can be viewed as a modest step in this direction. Unfortunately, my attempt at contacting the authors has not been successful.

## Chapter 4

# The diachrony of the perfective imperative in Japanese

### 4.1 Introduction

As stated in the concluding statements of chapter 2, we shall now discuss new insights into the history and development of imperative *-ta*. Said insights shall permit us to postulate a number of alternate hypotheses as to this development, all with their consequences in interpreting the diachronic evolution as well as the synchronic function of the construction. If we assume that *-ta* and *-e(ro)* imperatives alternate for a reason, then some underlying sets of rules must govern this alternation. In turn this set of rules must have its origin in a previous state of the language. What we surmise the set of rules to be will depend upon the view we take of the previous series of individually synchronic states that constitute the gradual evolution of a language feature, specifically, the various functions of the suffixes *-ta* and *-tari*. Ultimately, the precise details of this process will remain obscure, as it is well known in historical linguistics that the written record is a poor way of gaining information about colloquial language.

Our discussion will focus on establishing all the facts currently available as to the possible origins of the construction and on enumerating the hypotheses, ranging from the probable to the highly improbable, that the data allows us to put forward. The goal is to take the analysis of the diachrony of the perfective imperative in Japanese as far as it can be taken. To begin with, we observe the development of the suffixes of tense and aspect from which the perfective imperatives would later emerge.

### 4.2 The origins of *-tari* and *-ta*

Before we discuss the *-tari* and *-ta* imperative constructions of modern Japanese, we will first briefly survey the origins and original functions of the suffixes from which the imperatives are derived.

The historical development of the Modern Japanese system of tense and aspect cannot be traced without difficulty, and uncertainties remain. As Sandness writes: “Admittedly, the lack of truly colloquial texts or even descriptions of or disparaging references to the spoken language is a great obstacle to the researcher” (1999:96). The common view among scholars

is that *-tari* was derived from the earlier form *-te ari*. It is not found in the earliest available texts in Japanese, and in the *Manyooshuu* (8<sup>th</sup> century) we can still often find it in an uncontracted form (Sandness 1999:17). The specific function of the suffix is subject to discussion, but it may be concluded that it did not correspond to the (arguably) preterite function of present day *-ta*. It is generally viewed as expressing resultative and stative aspect (1999:19-20). Shinzato (2005a) describes it as a “perfective auxiliary, signaling completion of an event”, and as this view allows for a cohesive theory of the development of the perfective imperative, it is also the position that shall be taken in the present discussion.

*-Tari* was affected by *onbin* (diachronic sound change) at an early stage; the form *kitanari* for *kitaru nari* is found in *Tosa Nikki* (934). Sandness states that “[...] it is interesting to see at such an early date the sort of colloquial form that may have eventually led to the modern *-ta*.” (1999:22). When discussing *-tari* as an imperative it is also interesting to note that it originally had an imperative form *-tare*, which was rarely used (1999:17). Sansom (1928:178) gives an example of this form: *Torikomete okitare!* ‘Keep it shut up!’.

The *Heike monogatari* gives the first examples of *-tari* in what Sandness calls its “iterative-representative” form, or ...*-tari...-tari*, the use of *-tari* most regularly encountered in modern Japanese. The *Heike* used by Sandness is the edition included in the *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* published by Iwanami (1959-60), originally dating from 1370 (1999:128, 186). Sandness states that “With the merger of the *rentaikei* (attributive) and the *shuushikei* (predicative) forms, people may have begun interpreting *-tari* as the *renyookei* (conjunctive) of the commonly used *-taru*.” (1999:134)

Here some elucidation is in order. The distinction between what is in traditional Japanese grammatical terminology called the *rentaikei* and *shuushikei*, that is to say the attributive (also called adnominal) and the predicative (also called sentence final) forms of inflecting verbals, is a distinctive feature of pre-modern varieties of Japanese that was lost during the Kamakura period (Sandness 1999:115). There is also a third form relevant to the discussion, the *renyookei*, which is typically used with suffixes such as *-tari* and *-keri*, but is in the relevant instance used with a conjunctive function.

Example sentence (1) illustrates the occurrence of the *rentaikei* in classical and modern Japanese:

- (1) Shin-**uru** mono ari/ Shin-**u** hito ga i-ru.  
 die- ADN people exist die-NPAST people SBJ exist-NPAST  
 ‘There are people who die.’ (Classical Japanese/Modern Japanese)

(2) illustrates the use of the *shuushikei*:

- (2) Wotoko shin-**u**/            Otoko ga    shin-**u**.  
man    die-NPAST    man    SBJ die-NPAST  
'A man dies.' (CJ/MJ)

The *renyookei* or conjunctive form can be used to connect phrases in a use called *chuushihoo*<sup>45</sup> which is still seen in modern Japanese.

- (3) Miruku wo nom-**i**,            hanbaagaa o    tabe-ta.  
milk    OBJ drink-CONJ hamburger    OBJ eat-PAST  
'(I) drank milk **and** ate a hamburger.' (MJ)

In (4), taken from the *Heike*, we see iterated *-tari* used to express the performing of various similar tasks. The conjunctive use of the *renyookei* can here be said to link the phrase together in the sense of the English “and”.

- (4) [...] hai    -tari            nogoo-tari    chiri hiro-hi  
          sweep-TARI            wipe-TARI    trash pick.up  
'Sweeping, wiping, picking up trash...' (Shinzato 2005a:2)

As in Modern Japanese, the verb *su 'do'* (MJ *suru*) could be used at the end of the verbal phrase: [...] *omoki mono wo ohitari idahitari shite* [...] “shouldering or carrying heavy things” (Transcription from Shinzato 2005a:2 and translation from Sandness 1999:134). The modern day use of the “iterative-representative ...-tari... -tari” is not interpreted in the same way, as the suffix *-tari* now conveys the sense of “something like...” rather than expressing the conjunctive form of a marker of tense or aspect. This modern ...-tari ...-tari construction is described by Makino and Tsutsui (1986:458-461) as “a phrase which expresses an inexhaustive listing of actions or states”. Its use is demonstrated in the following example:

- (5) Watashi-tachi wa utat-tari    odot-tari    shi-ta.  
I-PLUR            TOP sing-TARI dance-TARI do-PAST  
'We did things like singing and dancing.' (Makino and Tsutsui 1986:458)

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<sup>45</sup> A related term, *chuushikei*, is translated by Sansom (1928:108) as “suspensive form”. He explains that “[...]the precise meaning of the words in the conjunctive form is held in suspense until we come to the word with the significant inflexion”, for instance, a *shuushikei* or conclusive form.

Returning to the general development of the suffix, during the Kamakura period (1185-1333), *-tari* took on a meaning of past tense, and gradually nudged out other suffixes such as *-tsu* and *-ki* (1999:168, 175, 192). At the same time, the new suffix *-ta* was gaining momentum. Sandness (1999:101) states that *-ta* is probably a product of *onbin* processes (phonological change). It developed during the Insei period (1089-1192) as a contraction of *-taru* (*te aru*) but Sandness states that it did probably not express past tense, being instead what she terms a “stative-resultative” (1999:112). She further states that the standard view of the suffix is that it developed in the East and gradually spread into Western Japan during Kamakura (1999:112). It appears in the *Shasekishuu*, compiled in 1283, although Sandness classes this early form as a mere contraction of *-tari* and not an independent preterite suffix. It is instead in the *Heike monogatari* that we find the first reliable attestation of *-ta* as a past tense marker.

- (6) Fashi wo fiita zo.  
 Ladder OBJ pull-PAST FP  
 ‘They pulled up the bridge.’ (Sandness 1999:134)

At least some of the *dramatis personae* using *-ta* in their speech are shown to be from Eastern Japan, which may provide evidence for the Eastern hypothesis (1999:135). However, Sandness also states that the form may already have been prevalent in both parts of Japan, and that ascribing the use of the colloquialism *-ta* to the Eastern forces is instead an attempt by the anonymous author(s) to make them seem uncultured. My examination of the *Heike monogatari*<sup>46</sup> unsurprisingly fails to reveal any instances of the *-ta* form that may be interpreted as constituting an imperative.

In the *Shikishoo*, dating from 1477, *-ta* is the most common suffix of tense and aspect (Sandness 1999:176). However, as it appears in conjunction with varieties of *-tari*, such as *-taru* and *-taredo*, its inflectional paradigm does not resemble the modern one. It is now primarily a suffix of past tense. Sandness states that: “There is no doubt that *-ta* is (here) the dominant past and perfective suffix and that the meaning no longer entirely overlaps with that of *-te aru*. Moreover, the other suffixes are either dead or greatly limited in usage.” (1999:181).

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<sup>46</sup> as available in digital form at <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/japanese/heike/heike.html>.

The past tense marker *-ta* was certainly well established by the time of the *Amakusaban Feique Monogatari* (1592), first printed by Portuguese missionaries in Kyushu, utilizing an early Romanization system for Japanese.

- (7) Satefate Yoxitçune ua icai tegara uo mefare -ta no?  
so Yoshitsune-TOP many deed-ACC do (HON)-PAST-QP  
'So, did Yoshitsune do many great deeds?'

Although the paradigm of *-ta (ri)* found here still differs from the modern one, containing the abovementioned *taru* and *-taredo(mo)*, the language of the text is comparatively close to Modern Japanese. An examination of the *Amakusaban Feique Monogatari*<sup>47</sup> shows hundreds of instantiations of *-ta* throughout the text, but my search for verbs used in the modern perfective imperative (*doku, matsu, noku*, etc.) revealed no evidence of *-ta* as an imperative marker. This, as with the earlier *Heike*, is not unexpected, as the *Amakusaban* is small when taken as a corpus, and there may simply have been no occasion in the story that called for the imperative use of *-ta*. More realistically, the construction may not yet have developed, (see below for details on the earliest potential attestation of imperative *-ta*) and even if it had, it may not have been used in the Kyushu variety of standard Japanese (Sandness 1999:182) recorded here. There is also the matter of vocabulary, as the verbs used in the equivalent constructions (if such constructions existed) at the time may not correspond to the ones used today.

Even after *-ta* had become the standard past tense marker, it co-existed with *-tari*, albeit in a different modality. When *-tari* was lost in virtually all spoken uses except the iterative-representative or *...-tari...-tari*, it still remained the main past tense marker of the written language, with *-ta* regarded as its spoken language variant. After the phasing out of *bungo* or literary Japanese during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *-tari* all but disappeared from both spoken and written language, except for the abovementioned iterative-representative, derived forms such as the conditional marker *-tara*, and another, more obscure form that we shall now discuss.

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<sup>47</sup> as available in digital form at <http://www.let.osaka-u.ac.jp/~okajima/bun/Feique/>.

### 4.3 Introducing imperative *-tari*

While undertaking the initial study of *-ta*, I interpreted the passing reference by Kudoo (1985) to

- (8) Saa saa, it-tari it-tari!  
Well well go-TARI go-TARI  
'Go on, scram!'

as indicating a construction that no longer existed and considered it to be a possible origin of imperative *-ta* (Svahn 2007:27). The main reason for this was Martin's (1988:966) report that Yoshida (1971:241) described the use of *-tari* as an imperative as being common in the Edo period. Indeed, Yoshida cites a use of imperative *-tari* in fiction (*Korya korya, mattari mattari!* 'Hey, wait!') from as far back as 1809. Shinzato (2005b) defines the use of iterative *-tari* as a "request", tracing its origin to the perfective function of modern *...-tari...-tari*, otherwise known for its use in enumerating events in an imprecise fashion (see example 5). The dictionary *Koojien* acknowledges the existence of the construction, listing one of the uses of modern *-tari* as *meirei* 'command' or *kan'yuu* 'persuasion', with *Saa, doitari, doitari* 'Out of the way!' as an example.

Imperative *-tari* as referred to by Yoshida (1971), Kudoo (1985), Shinzato (2005a, b) and mentioned in *Koojien* is a construction that, to some extent, exists today along with imperative *-ta*. However, it may no longer be part of the native competence of speakers. If imperative *-ta* is a marked and recessive form, then imperative *-tari* is even further down that path. Its use is rarer than that of the *-ta* imperative and probably confined to older generations. In chapter 2 it was stated that the informant for the original survey (a native of Hiroshima prefecture in his early twenties, educated at Waseda University, Tokyo) did not recognize the use of *-tari* as an imperative. When questioning native speakers about the use of *Doitari, doitari*, certain facts emerge. A woman in her 60s, raised in Aichi prefecture, says she has no clear intuitions as to its use, but she may have heard her father use the expression. Her main exposure to the form comes from occasional uses in literature, and she considers it unusual. A woman in her late 40s, speaker of the Tokyo dialect, states that her father would say *detari detari*, half in jest and half seriously. She further states that *detari detari* sounds funny and similar to the way people talk in an old story, while *deta deta* just means *dero* 'get out'.

Typing "*doitari doitari*" into the search engine Google gives some insight. The most promising references concern a children's book from 1965 called *Noromana Rooraa* 'Stupid

roller' which is about an (anthropomorphized) yellow asphalt roller. The “stupid roller”, driving around wantonly, is twice told by other anthropomorphized vehicles to get out of the way. The two relevant sentences are: *Jama da yo, jama da yo. Doitari doitari.* ‘You’re in the way! Get out of the way!’ and *Oi oi, noroma rooraa-kun. Doitari doitari. aq haq ha.* ‘Hey, stupid roller! Get out of my way, ah ha ha.’

Miyake Takayuki of Tokyo University of Foreign Language Studies, writing about the children's book in his personal weblog, states that he does not recognize the meaning of *Doitari, doitari*, even though he is a native speaker of Japanese. He theorizes that his mother tongue being the Hiroshima dialect may have something to do with the lack of recognition. Interestingly (but without necessary significance) this is the same geographical origin as that of the original informant, who also did not recognize the iterated *-tari* imperative. Miyake does correctly surmise that the meaning must be *Doke!* ‘Out of the way’.

The other significant reference to *Noromana rooraa* comes by way of the Internet version of a review column for books, *Michiura Toshihiko no dokusho nikki* (Michiura Toshihiko's Reading Diary, issue of 17 November 2008). Michiura states that the *doitari* iterations are archaic in tone. Interestingly, he also states that the construction cannot be the same as *doitari* in the Osaka dialect, which means *Doite yarinasai!* ‘Move out of the way’. Thus, there seems to exist in the Osaka dialect a variation on imperative *-tari*, perhaps without iteration of the verb, and based on the use of *-nasai*, with more serious and colloquial connotations. He further states that one does not hear *Doitari, doitari* these days at all, but that he has vague memories of having done so in the past. He also mentions a construction *shite yattari* which he claims may be an example of the same construction. Michiura also mentions that the author of the children's book was born in 1916, which may be relevant. The author would have been in the same generation as the fathers of the two informants. They were possibly members of the last generation to actively use the construction, although it was not for them a completely serious imperative.

Based on this evidence we can posit that Japanese speakers with solid intuitions on imperative *-tari* are at least two generations removed from today's younger language users. As for the stylistic properties of the construction, it appears (at least in its use in the 1900s) to be less serious in tone than imperative *-ta*. The vehicles in the story laugh when they pass by, and Miyake quotes the *Shin meikai kokugo jiten* as calling it a “light” imperative. Yoshida (1971:242) also has something to say about this, calling it “slightly jocular” (*chotto karakatte iu go*). We can thus surmise that it was not primarily used in times of stress and anger. Perhaps the archaic tone had a distancing effect which led to its use in a joking manner, just as

imperative *-ta* is sometimes used jokingly today. From this point of view, the *-tari* imperative took on this connotation as it became increasingly marginalized and its use became more and more archaic and grandfatherly. Another possibility is that this characteristic was already established when the two imperatives were used side by side in the middle to late Edo period, and that the *-ta* imperative was already more serious in tone at this time.

#### 4.4 Different approaches: Yoshida, Shinzato, Cho

In this section we find an account of three different approaches to explaining the development of imperative *-ta* in relation to the earlier *-tari* imperative. This paves the way for the following subchapter, in which we find the final discussion of the diachrony of the perfective imperative in Japanese.

Yoshida Kanehiko, in his 1971 book *Gendai jodooshi no shiteki kenkyuu* (Historical research on modern auxiliaries), gives perhaps the most complete account of imperative *-ta* and its historical development to be found in the literature. He also provides us with the earliest potential attestation of the *-ta/-tari* imperative in Japanese, the use of *Matta!* ‘Wait!’ in a kabuki play from 1715 (1971:240). If valid, this attestation of the *-ta* imperative predates that of its *-tari* counterpart. Although the matter of this particular instance constituting an imperative is not clear, he states that “this expression and the like are old ones” (my trans). Yoshida (1971:241) offers three possible explanations of the function of the perfective imperative. The first one is based around the certainty expressed by the *-ta* suffix. Yoshida states that: “If you turn the “confirmation” of *-ta* towards yourself it becomes intention. If you turn it towards an addressee, it becomes an order”. The following chart is adapted from Yoshida (1971: 241):

Normal sentence	“Tense” sentence <sup>48</sup>
1. <i>Boku wa hon wo <u>katta</u>.</i> <sup>49</sup>	2. <i>Yoshi, <u>katta!</u> (Intention)</i>
3. <i>Kimi wa hon wo <u>katta</u>.</i>	4. <i>Saa, <u>katta!</u> (Order)</i>

<sup>48</sup> As in relating to emotional tension, not grammatical tense. The Japanese expression is *kinchoobun*.

<sup>49</sup> In English: 1. ‘I bought a book’. 2. ‘All right, I’ll buy it!’ 3. ‘You bought a book.’ 4. ‘Buy it!’

This is similar to Teramura's (1982: 341) reference to an "emotional state of tension" associated with the *-ta* imperative. The second hypothesis is that *-ta* is a phonetic reduction of the old *-tari* imperative form, *-tare*. However, Yoshida dismisses this idea, explaining that this form was rare even in the classical language. This is in line with the view, as stated in chapter 2, that imperative *-ta* is not a phonetic alteration of any other imperative construction (Yoshida also states that we cannot view it as being the same as *-te*).

However, continuing the discussion of phonetic reduction, he posits a third explanation that is by far the most intriguing. He states that imperative *-ta* may be a phonetic reduction of the *renyookei* of *-tari* used to express an imperative, and goes on to explain that there are many examples of the use of the *-tari renyookei* as an imperative in the Edo period. Yoshida further states that the last hypothesis is the most probable of the three ones outlined, as the use of *-tari* and *-ta* is identical. Imperative *-tari* and *-ta* may thus be viewed as being examples of the same construction (Yoshida 1971:241).

Yoshida cites examples of the use of verbs in their *renyookei* form as imperatives from the Edo period until modern times, among them examples from 1777: *Ippuku nomi, sa sa* 'Go on, drink up!' and 1968: *Hotaru to issho ni tengoku e iki* 'Go to heaven together with the fireflies'.<sup>50</sup> He concludes that based on this evidence, imperative *-ta* and *-tari* may be viewed as imperative uses of the *renyookei* (1971:242). However, Yoshida also states that the use of imperative *-tari* has declined in modern times, and gives an example of its use in a more recent context: *Shoowa no musume ga meishin nanka, yametari, yametari!* 'A modern day<sup>51</sup> girl believing in superstitions? Cut it out!' This, he states, is not a normal imperative, but a way of forbidding something in a slightly jocular fashion. Based on this view, the assumption that imperative *-tari* has evolved to become perceived as odd and humorous appears correct.

Yoshida explains that the *-ta* imperative is usually analyzed as a use of the *shuushikei*, but he contends that it fundamentally constitutes a use of the *renyookei chuushihoo* (continuative form when used as a conjunction), and contests the view of Hashimoto (1969) that the *renyoo* use of *-tari* does not occur in spoken language (Yoshida 1971:242). Having received an outline of Yoshida's *renyookei* hypothesis, we move on to the next view of the phenomenon.

In an unpublished conference paper (2005a) kindly provided by Shinzato Rumiko, she

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<sup>50</sup> Although Yoshida relies on literary sources for all examples, there are other ways of confirming that the imperative use of the *renyookei* is not only a historical phenomenon. Its use as an imperative is seen today, for instance, in Kansai varieties of Japanese. The last example sentence (from the novel *Grave of the Fireflies*, original title *Hotaru no haka*) is from a character speaking a Kansai dialect.

<sup>51</sup> lit. 1926-1989, but modern at time of writing.

traces the development of *-tari* from perfective suffix in Old Japanese (the earliest attested stage of the language, roughly 700-800 CE) to discourse particles in Modern Japanese. She touches upon imperative *-tari* as one of the later evolved uses of the form and states that the use of *-tari* as a request is directly related to its perfectivity.

- (9) Kiza-na hanashi wa yame-tari. Yame-tari.  
 pompous story TOP stop- TARI stop-TARI  
 ‘Stop telling pompous stories. Stop doing that.’ (Shinzato 2005b:1)

“The use of a perfective aspect marker for the unrealized situation like [(9)] invites the hearer to infer that the said situation is viewed by the speaker as a *done* deal, and thus should be realized immediately.” (Shinzato 2005b:1). The example sentence is taken from a series of comedy books published from 1813 to 1823. She describes the use of *-tari -tari* in Middle Japanese to describe the iterated occurrence of similar actions (see the introduction for a description of said use in the *Heike Monogatari*), and states that the development of the request sense of the construction took place in Early Modern Japanese.<sup>52</sup> Shinzato’s view of the construction is thus that it originates in the precursor to the iterative-representative and that the perfectivity of the *-tari* suffix and, presumably, not its constituting a *renyookei* is what forms the basis for its use as an imperative.

A description shall now be given of the third and final view of the origin of imperative *-ta*. In her 2003 paper ‘*Ta*’ no mentaru supeesu rironteki kaishaku (An interpretation of *-ta* based on the mental space theory), Cho Mikyung contests the view of Teramura (1982) that imperative *-ta* has to do with presenting an action as something that has already occurred. In her view, if imperative *-ta* is the *-ta* of completion (*kanryoo no ta*), then utterances employing the polite *masu*-form but preserving the *-ta* marker such as *Dokimashita!* ‘(You) moved out of the way!’ and *Kaimashita!* ‘(You) bought (it)’ should also be possible. There are various objections to be made to this statement, among them the observations that deictic projection is cross-linguistically associated with informal contexts and that dictating the actions of another in the manner associated with imperative *-ta* (see chapter 2) may be incompatible with politeness in Japanese.

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<sup>52</sup> Typically defined as from 1600 onwards.

Nonetheless, Cho cites examples from Yuzawa (1954)<sup>53</sup>, who uses much the same examples as Yoshida (1971), to attest the existence of imperative *-ta* and *-tari* in the Edo period. Based on this she posits the hypothesis that imperative *-ta* is not based on the completive use of *-ta* but rather derived from the use of *-tari* as a nominalizer (*meishisootokuku*). She further states that the sentence *Doita doita!* ‘out of the way’ may be equivalent to *Doitari doitari!* which in turn is equivalent to *Taijoo!*, the imperative use of a noun meaning “exit”, similar to English noun-based directives such as “Order!” “Silence!” and the like. Although there is a precedent for the use of nouns as imperatives both in Japanese (*Kiritsu!* ‘Stand!’ *Tabako wo suwanai koto!* ‘Do not smoke!’) and in English (see above), Cho’s hypothesis is, as far as I know, the only attempt to analyze imperative *-ta* in this manner.

#### 4.5 The diachrony of the perfective imperative in Japanese: a final hypothesis

Based on the information available, several hypotheses can be made as to the emergence and function of imperative *-ta* and *-tari*. They are as follows:

1. Imperative *-ta* is a contraction of the aspectual marker *-tari* as found in the classical language, by way of imperative *-tari*. This description was employed in the previous thesis but now appears overly simplistic.
2. Imperative *-tari* (and its resultant form imperative *-ta*) are derived from *-tare*, the imperative form of *-tari*, as posited by Yoshida (1971). As stated by Yoshida himself, this hypothesis is improbable.
3. As suggested by Bjarke Frellesvig at the 7th conference of the Nordic Association of Japanese and Korean Studies (personal communication), imperative *-ta* is ultimately derived from what Sandness calls the iterative-representative *...-tari ...-tari*. This hypothesis is supported by Shinzato’s (2005a, b) description of the development of an imperative use of *...-tari ...-tari* through its association with perfective aspect and the perception that the action involved is “a done deal” (although she does not mention imperative *-ta*). Furthermore, Shinzato’s view ties in with the previous discussion of

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<sup>53</sup> Yuzawa (1954:410-413), (1970:370f) lists several examples of early *-tari* and *-ta* imperatives, but does not go into detail about their use.

deictic projection and perfective-completive aspect, providing a link between the historical development of *-tari*, *-ta*, and the perfective imperative as a cross-linguistic phenomenon. It is thus an attractive hypothesis, and would also be helpful in explaining the phenomenon of iteration of the verb so often found in *-tari* and *-ta* imperatives, as it is a prominent feature of iterative *-tari*.

4. As hypothesized by Yoshida (1971), imperative *-ta* is derived from imperative *-tari*, which is in turn an imperative use of the *renyookei* rather than an example of deictic projection involving “perfective-completive” aspect. However, as stated by Sandness (1999), a *renyookei* interpretation of *-tari* may be involved in the formation of the original iterative-representative, and if this is true then Yoshida is to some extent correct.
5. As hypothesized by Cho (2003), imperative *-ta* is derived from the use of imperative *-tari* as a nominalizer, not from the use of perfective-completive aspect. This seems unlikely considering the available evidence.
6. The *-tari* and *-ta* imperatives are diachronically unrelated phenomena, having arisen from the *-tari* and *-ta* suffixes independently, but both functioning as perfective imperatives. If Yoshida is right about the constructions being identical in usage, this development appears unlikely.

The third hypothesis is the most promising one, and it shall be the focus of our subsequent discussion. Nonetheless, questions still remain.

If imperative *-ta* can be ultimately traced to ...*-tari*...*-tari*, the phenomenon of iteration so often seen in its use can be explained as being a remnant of its original character as an “iterative-representative”. However, among the earliest attestations of imperative *-ta* and *-tari*, there are cases in which the verb is not iterated, for instance the possible *Matta!* ‘Wait!’ attestation from 1715 (Yoshida 1971:240). That non-iteration was possible at such an early stage suggests either that the imperative is not originally derived from an iterated form, or that the construction, at the time of attestation, had existed long enough to differentiate itself from iterative *-tari* in this regard, making iteration non-compulsory. However, it must also be noted that “representative *-tari*” can also be used without iteration, in constructions such as *mattari shite* ‘doing things like waiting’.

As the equivalent of the data gathered in Svahn (2007) as to the specific characteristics of imperative *-ta* is not available for imperative *-tari* due to a lack of informants with intuitions on the topic, an assessment of the degree to which the two expressions are similar from a grammatical and usage standpoint is difficult. Yoshida's (1971) statement that the two were identical in usage is thus hard to confirm empirically. Further, a diachronic explanation of the function of imperative *-ta*, as presented above, is difficult to unify with the hypothesis of “advance *-ta* by proxy” as described in chapter 2.

There also remains the question of phonetic reduction. Imperative *-ta* is derived from imperative *-tari*, which in turn is derived from iterative *-tari*, which in turn is the last holdout of the *-tari* form which has been replaced in all its other uses by the newer suffix *-ta*. If iterative *-tari* and other derived forms such as *-tara* have survived phonetically, why, then, did its derived form, imperative *-tari* become reduced to *-ta*, and why did the two imperatives coexist for a minimum time period of 1809 to 1965 (the earliest and latest written attestations of imperative *-tari* available to me) while having what Yoshida claims were, at least initially, identical uses?

The following is mere conjecture, but it may be that imperative *-tari* was reduced phonologically because of the speed needed in a hurried, rude imperative, as opposed to the use of the ...*-tari*...*-tari* form. As the conjugation of modern *-tari* is identical to that of *-ta* except for the added *ri*, imperative *-ta*, although diverging from *-tari* at a later time than *-ta*, was reanalyzed as a use of *-ta*, and is perceived as such today. This is a parallel to the German *Partizip II* imperative, which may be a passive but is now mainly interpreted as a perfect.

If we accept the fact that it is ultimately derived from iterated *-tari*, the fact that imperative *-ta* is possibly attested in a non-iterated form as early as 1715 indicates that the construction had existed for some time before this date. Indeed, although the language of these plays and books may be presumed to reflect colloquial usage, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that it may lag behind the spoken language to some extent. A clear time and place for the emergence of imperative *-tari* cannot be fixed, although my guess is the Kanto region, the reason being that the written sources cited for imperative *-ta* are from Edo and thus reflect the Edo spoken vernacular. However, Sandness (1999:219) states that all dialects of Japanese with an iterative form use ...*-tari*...*-tari*, meaning that we cannot with certainty state that the imperative use did *not* develop in any specific region. Possibly a contrastive analysis of the aspectual system of other Japanese dialects as opposed to the Edo dialect/modern standard Japanese would be helpful in this regard, but this is not currently

possible. Miyake's reference to an imperative use of *-tari* in the Osaka dialect is also interesting, although it cannot be pursued further due to time constraints.

1600 and 1800 can be used as the start and end points for the time span within which the construction must have developed, and we may arbitrarily but not implausibly reduce this time span by half to end up with a less cautious estimate of 1650-1750. If Yoshida's attestation of imperative *-ta* from 1715 is valid, then the process of contraction from *-tari* (and a possible reduction from iterated to single) would already be complete at this point, which allows us to put the date quite a bit earlier than 1715. Still, even if we do not allow for this, 1650-1750 should be reasonable.

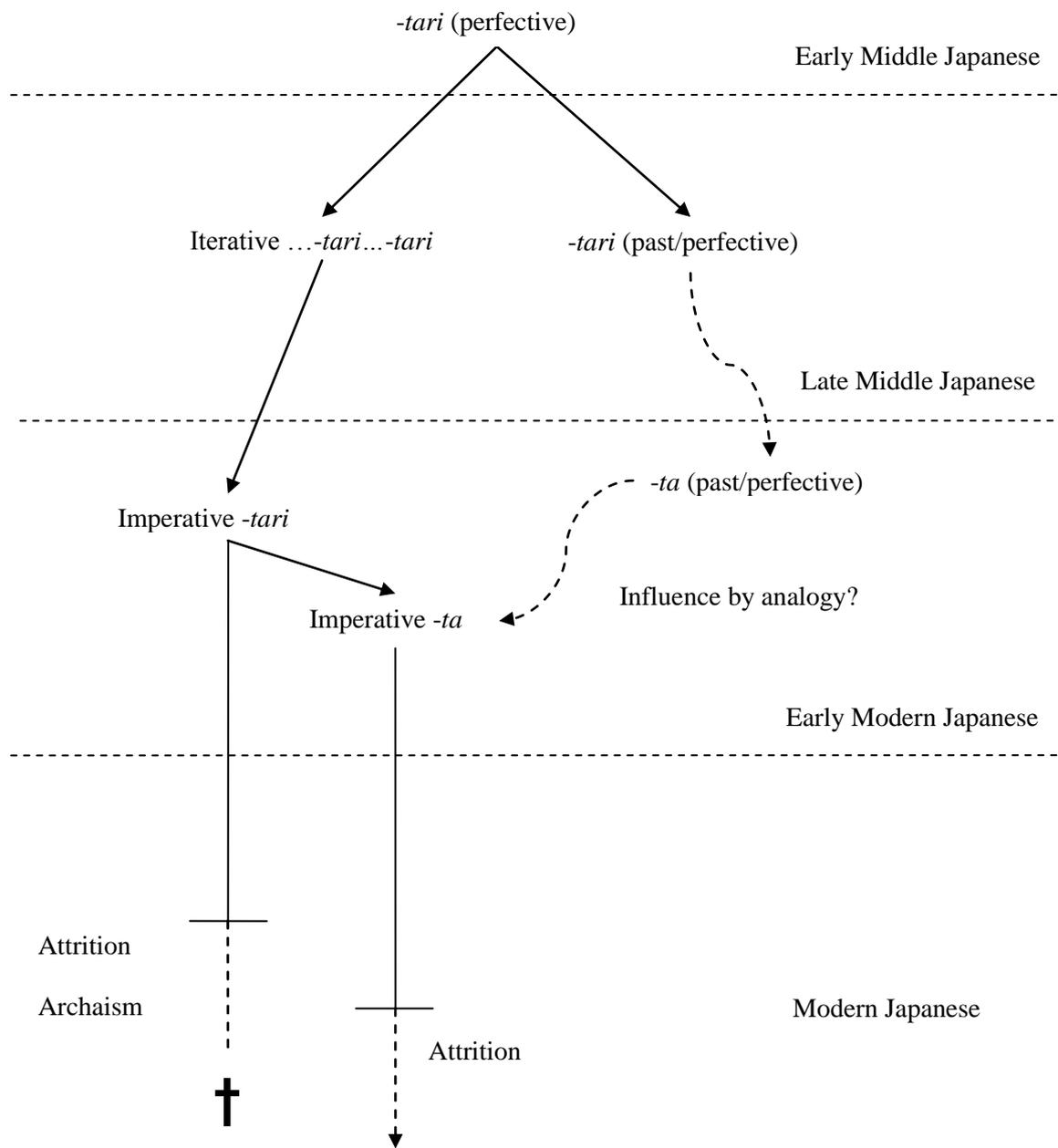
Having accepted the ...*-tari*...*-tari* hypothesis as the most probable, the timeline of the development of the perfective imperative in Japanese may be presented thus:

1. From the iterative-representative ...*-tari* ...*-tari* is derived a use as an imperative. This imperative is associated with the use of *-tari* in a perfective-completive context.  
At this stage, *-ta* has already replaced *-tari* as the main past tense suffix of Japanese.
2. From imperative *-tari* emerges the phonetically reduced form imperative *-ta*, possibly through analogy with past/perfective *-ta*. Both imperative *-tari* and *-ta* are used in the middle to late Edo period, perhaps with little to no difference in use.
3. Imperative *-tari* falls into disuse and becomes archaic and humorous in tone, while imperative *-ta* retains its function as a rude imperative.
4. Today few Japanese use or even recognize the *-tari* imperative. Furthermore, the *-ta* imperative is regarded by my informant as old-fashioned and humorous, although it is still used seriously at times. It is probable that the *-ta* imperative will undergo the same process of attrition as imperative *-tari*.<sup>54</sup>

The timeline can be represented as in the diagram below. Dotted lines indicate an indirect line of descent.

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<sup>54</sup> As an anecdotal observation by the author, in the context of Japanese popular culture and role language as described by Kinsui (2003), I have not seen the use of imperative *-ta* in situations of hurry and anger where it would be appropriate, only *-te* or *-e(ro)* imperatives and similar forms. An interesting question is thus: was imperative *-ta* found in such a context in earlier popular literature?



## 4.6 Conclusion

This concludes the discussion of the diachrony of the perfective imperative in Japanese. In the following chapter we move on to theoretical issues relating to the research presented in chapters 2 and 3.

## Chapter 5

### Further theoretical discussion

#### 5.1 Introduction

In this final chapter we address theoretical issues raised by the hypothesis of "imperative *-ta* by proxy" as outlined in chapter 2, and examine a possible way of explaining the development of non-canonical uses of tense and aspect through the concept of conventionalization of implicature. We also touch upon other issues relating to imperative *-ta*, such as the restriction on *-te i-* forms and the use of *Katta katta!* 'Buy (it)!' by shopkeepers.

#### 5.2 Deictic projection revisited

We have previously seen examples of cross-linguistic uses of past tense markers in a perfective context to express the certain future and subjective deontic modality through deictic projection. In this section we apply the same framework to the hypothesis of "Advance *-ta* by proxy". The *Katta katta!* - *Yoshi katta!* exchange may be described as a twofold process of temporal and personal deictic projection. We recall the assertion made in chapter 2 that the speaker of an imperative *-ta* command is

1. Projecting himself in the hearer's place, in effect "becoming" the hearer.
2. Projecting himself (the speaker/hearer) into a future in which he has already completed the action expressed by his statement.

We also recall Levinson's (1983:64) statement that deictic projection constitutes "[...] usages, in which deictic expressions are used in ways that shift [the] deictic centre to other participants [...]". The process of deictic projection at work in advance and imperative *-ta* may be expressed as in the following chart.

	<b>Personal deictic center</b>	<b>Temporal deictic center</b>
<b>Standard <i>-ta</i></b>	Speaker	Utterance time
<b>Advance <i>-ta</i></b>	Speaker	The future
<b>Imperative <i>-ta</i></b>	The addressee	The future

### 5.3 The perfective imperative as an implicature

Lars Larm (personal communication) proposes a model in which conversational implicature led to the formation of imperative *-ta*. A one-time statement such as "I bought that banana" (intended to mean "I will definitively buy that banana!") can through repeated use and diffusion in a group of speakers become conventionalized and grammaticalized until it becomes intersubjective, and a part of the encoded grammar of a group of speakers. This ties in well with the general concept of deictic projection, in which the certainty of the past is projected into the uncertain future to negate said uncertainty, as it offers a way of explaining how such expressions become a part of the grammar of the language. It is probable that the causes underlying the original innovation may to a large extent be found in the systems of aspect and tense of the specific language itself, such as a conflation of the future and modal forms expressing uncertainty, as compared to markers of past tense and perfect or perfective aspects signaling completion and certainty (See Tavangar and Amouzadeh 2006:107). My own approach to explaining the origin of imperative *-ta* has been through a different method, though the concept of conventionalization of implicature may prove fruitful in future attempts to explain the development of non-canonical uses of tense and aspect cross-linguistically.

### 5.4 Perfective or resultative? Imperative *-ta* and *-te i-*

As stated in chapter 2, in Japanese, the notion of perfective and imperfective aspect is semantically encoded in the verb. A verb may be rendered imperfective in interpretation by the use of the verbal auxiliary *-te i-* (*-te iru/ita*). Thus, imperative *-ta* denies the use of this construction. However, *shunkanteki* verbs such as *shinu*, when used the *-te i-* form, express a notion of completion, such as in the sentence *Neko ga shinde iru* 'The cat is dead/has died'. The utterances *Shinda* '(It) died' and *Shinde iru* '(it) has died' express highly similar propositions.

Thus, in the *shunkanteki* verbs used in imperative *-ta* utterances, the *-te i-* form expresses not an imperfective, but a completed state as in the English perfect. Why, then, if the notion of completion and the use of *-ta* as an imperative are so closely linked, can not the *-te i-* form be used to give an order as well? Thus, why is there no *\*Doite iru!* or *\*Doite ita!* (presumably intended to mean) 'Out of the way'?

Soga (1983:24) defines *-te i-* as a resultative, and the construction is highly comparable to the historical use of *-te ari/ -tari* in sentences with resultative meaning. Indeed, the constructions are identical in their use of the *-te* form and a verb of existence. If we agree with Soga that the use of *-te i-* expresses resultative aspect and that imperative *-ta* demands a verb associated with completivity, this seeming contradiction can be reconciled. It has previously been stated that the imperative use of *-ta* is restricted to a perfective-completive use, and that its usage is descended from the use of *-tari* in such a context, not in a resultative one. Note this statement by Soga (my emphasis): “The Japanese resultative form is either non-past, as in *sinde iru*, “is dead”, or past, as in *sinde ita*, “was dead” [...] It is concerned with the ‘existing state’ as a result of past action or event, and as such it must be associated with the notion of durativity and continuity, and hence, with *imperfectivity*”(1983:24).

On a related note, why do we find imperatives such as *Tatsu!* and *Tatte iro!* but not *Tatte iru?* Shinzato (2003:212) explains that “Verbals without stative extensions [such as *-ta*] are associated with such features as speaker involvement, experiencer perspective, immediacy and directness, while verbals with stative extensions [such as *-te i-*] exhibit speaker detachment, observer perspective, mediacy, and indirectness”. She goes on to quote Inoue (1978) as explaining that *-ta* is preferable over the *-te iru* perfect in cases of “strong emotional endorsement by the speaker into his utterance” (2003:214).

In Chapter 2, Soga (1990: 104) was quoted as saying “[...] the use of the past tense suggests a detached and objective attitude on the part of the speaker toward the situation, but the use of the non-past tense suggests the speaker’s subjective and psychological involvement with the situation”. This conception need not be incompatible with Shinzato’s description of *-te i-* as a marker of detachment and *-ta* as a marker of emotional involvement if one views advance and imperative *-ta* as cases of “subjective perceived objectivity” as defined in chapter 2. That is to say, the speaker is expressing the perceived objectivity of the completion of an event in a subjective way. Furthermore, Soga’s argument is about the alternation between the *-ru* and the *-ta* forms, not about *-ta* and *-te i-*.

The subjectivity/psychological immediacy potential of the markers can be hypothesized to be *ru > ta > -te i-*, with the final one being the most objective and with the greatest amount of emotional distance. Both imperative *-ta* and advance *-ta* certainly have to do with immediacy and emotional involvement, and so the lack of *-te iru/ -te ita* as imperatives is not surprising. Indeed, Hasegawa (1998) states that “when both *-TA* and the *-TE i-* plus *-RU* refer to a past situation, a salient difference between them is that *-TA* implies subjectivity, and *-TE i-RU* objectivity”.

Tavangar and Amouzadeh (2009:860), speaking of non-canonical uses of the past tense in Persian, state that “It is important to note that only the simple past tense is capable of being modalized subjectively [for instance, as expressing subjective deontic modality, i.e. orders]. The past progressive and the past perfect are, therefore, not amendable to subjectivization as such. The reason for this is not at all clear”. This may be related to the factors described by Shinzato (2003).

### **5.5 General and specific imperatives: the case of *Katta katta!***

If imperative *-ta* is the least polite of all imperative constructions (Hirata 1987), then why is it used in phrases such as *Banana katta katta!* ‘Bananas for sale!’ by greengrocers (*yaoyasan*) and the like? Various attempts can be made to explain the seeming discrepancy between the politeness typically shown by Japanese during business transactions<sup>55</sup> and the rudeness of imperative *-ta*. Thomas Gross (personal communication) posits the hypothesis that the status of a greengrocer as a *shokunin* or craftsman gives him the right to be proud and haughty towards his customers. Another hypothesis is that the markedness of the *-ta* imperative is used to gain the attention of the crowd, thus maximizing the chance that someone will notice you and perhaps buy the product you are selling.

A third hypothesis, which may be connected to the previous one, is that the imperative is not directed primarily towards individuals but rather towards the crowd, thus diffusing the rudeness of the expression. Perhaps relevantly, Takagi (1999:71-75) states that the *-e (ro)* imperative is more natural than the *-ru* imperative when addressing pupils in a large space such as a gymnastics hall, with a greater physical distance to the addressees. Possibly the rudeness of the *-ta* imperative is diffused through its use towards a crowd of people rather than towards individuals, and through the social distance between the greengrocer and the prospective customer. We may thus refer to two separate uses of the imperative, the *general* and the *specific*, with the general imperative lacking the degree of rudeness pertaining to its specific counterpart and functioning more as a form of encouragement (see Takagi 1999:74f). When addressing a crowd of people passing by, the rudeness of the form is lost in the social and physical distance between the speaker and the addressees (the greengrocer may not know them by name) and the amount of people involved. The severity of the imperative is thus

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<sup>55</sup> Axel Theorin (personal communication) suggests that the social norms and expectations governing interaction with Japanese greengrocers differ from those governing other transactions, being on a more informal and intimate level that allows for the use of less deferential language.

diluted when addressing a crowd. The conventionalization of this mode of expression may also serve to lessen this effect, as this is “just the way people talk”, for instance, the *gyooji* (see chapter 2) is not perceived as rude. If the greengrocer were to grab a potential customer by the arm, stare them in the eye, and yell *Katta katta!*, the rudeness of the construction would be manifest. But in a more general context of encouragement, it need not be so.

A marked use of tense when trying to catch the attention of a crowd has previously been discussed in chapter 3, namely the case of Swedish *Här var det damen utan ben!* ‘Come see the lady with no legs!’ Further, imperative *-ta* is not the only non-canonical imperative used for this purpose in Japanese. Martin (2004:966) quotes Toojoo (1954:196f) as mentioning a polite version of the *-ru* imperative used by peddlers: *Kaimasu!* ‘(You will) buy (some)!’

Axel Theorin (personal communication) adds a final hypothesis, stating that the use of an impolite imperative by the greengrocers might be an attempt to convey a sense of informality and social intimacy (similar in part to the humorous use of imperative *-ta* among friends), thus playing on social conventions to make the customers more receptive to what they have to offer.

## 5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter various theoretical issues on the topic of the Japanese perfective imperative were addressed. While most topics here are intended merely to wrap up the discussion and clear up uncertainties regarding some of the properties of the construction, the approach of analyzing non-canonical uses of tense and aspect as conventionalization of implicature may prove fruitful in future descriptions of similar phenomena.

## Conclusion

In the present thesis attempts have been made to broaden the scope of original survey (Svahn 2007) by further elucidating the diachrony of the perfective imperative in Japanese and by explicating its place in the larger cross-linguistic context of past and perfective imperatives. The concept of deictic projection has been used as a way of outlining this greater context.

The account made in the present thesis of the origin and function of the perfective imperative in Japanese is not a definitive one. I believe, however, that it is the most complete account available on the topic to date, and that it contributes to our understanding of the phenomenon. As previously stated, an analysis of an isolate form is not sufficient to understand the full range of non-canonic imperative constructions and “irregular” uses of tense and aspect in Japanese. A fuller account would contain a detailed analysis of several of these constructions, such as the *-ru* command, advance *-ta*, and other peripheral constructions, containing detailed surveys of their use and explorations of their diachrony, along with an overreaching theory as to their relation to the Japanese system of tense and aspect in general. The search for perfective imperatives or similar peripheral constructions in Japanese dialects and in Okinawan should also not be neglected.

The largest avenue of future research is the further exploring of non-canonic uses of tense and aspect, as manifested in certain futures, “Let’s go!” hortatives and imperatives, through a contrastive and typological mapping out of their use in the languages of the world. Much has yet to be said about these kinds of constructions, and as shown in chapter 3, the very existence of the “past tense imperative” as a valid category is still uncertain; the only common feature identified being a tendency towards the use of perfective-completive aspect.

Still, this much is clear: With 6912 existing languages estimated by Ethnologue and half a million languages having been spoken since the dawn of man (Evans and Levinson 2009:7, referring to Pagel 2000), one can imagine that thousands of these must have had past or perfective markers take on function of expressing a command. Hundreds of them are probably around today. What was viewed by most scholars as a quirk of Japanese pragmatics may now be placed in a wider category, as a linguistic phenomenon shared in principle, if not necessarily in the details of usage and historical development, with many other languages.

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