Imperative -*ta* in colloquial Japanese
A descriptive analysis

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Abstract

The use of the past tense form (or *ta*-form) as an imperative in modern Japanese has been touched upon by various scholars. However, a descriptive analysis of the phenomenon has not yet been performed. In this thesis, the characteristics of this type of *ta*-form usage and the rules governing it are described through a contrastive analysis of the way in which the usage of imperative *-ta* differs from the other imperative forms of modern Japanese. The relation between aspect and grammatical mood seen in imperative *-ta* is then discussed, focusing on the connection between imperative *-ta* and perfective aspect.

Keywords: Aspect, tense, Japanese language, past tense, *-ta*

CONTENTS

CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Glossing

The system used for glossing Japanese vocabulary in this paper corresponds to the Leipzig Glossing Rules. Some of the abbreviations are as used by Larm (2006). A list of abbreviations is given below.

Romanization

The modified Hepburn system of romanization has been used for transcribing Japanese vocabulary, with the exception being that macrons are not used to mark syllabic n. Words generally considered to be part of the English lexicon, such as place names, have been transcribed as is customary.

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	COP	copula
DAT	dative	FP	final particle
GER	gerund	HON	honorific
IMP	imperative	NEG	negative
NIMP	negative imperative	NPAST	nonpast
OBJ	object	PAST	past
POLITIMP	polite imperative	PRF	perfect
QP	question particle	SBJ	subject
TOP	topic		

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 The topic

The current paper is concerned with a descriptive analysis of 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 *sonzaina meirei*, (often translated as 'crude command' and 'rough command'), "indirect command", and other terms. In this paper, it shall be called "imperative -*ta*".

1.2 Methodology, organisation, and data

After an overview of constructions related to the concept to imperative -*ta*, such as the past tense suffix -*ta* itself and various imperative constructions in Japanese, the use, structure, and function of imperative -*ta* is described and analyzed using both the available literature on the subject and the input of a native informant. Through the use of example sentences and the intuitions of a native speaker, the rules governing the use of imperative -*ta* are described. The informant is a male native of Hiroshima prefecture, currently a student at Waseda University in Tokyo. The paper functions not only as a synthesis of what has been previously written on the subject, but also contains new information based on said input. The focus of the paper is 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 example sentences used in this paper has been gathered from a variety of sources; from the existing literature, the informant, and from the Internet, using the search engine *Google*. Some have been created by me. Example sentences used in describing imperative *-ta* have been checked for accuracy by the informant.

Chapter 2
Introduction to related constructions

2.1 Introduction

In order to facilitate understanding the linguistic context of the imperative use of the *ta*-form or past tense form, the basic properties of the *ta*-form (or "past form") are outlined in this chapter, and an overview of the various imperative constructions available to Japanese speakers is given.

2.2 The *ta*-form

The question of whether the verbal suffix *-ta* is primarily a marker of aspect or of tense has been the subject of some debate.[1] The suffix is, however, generally used when referring to events in past tense, contrasting with the verbal suffix *-ru* which, in turn, is generally used when referring to events in present and future tense.

(3)   Taroo wa   yoku miruku o   nom-u.[2]
       Taroo TOP often milk   OBJ drink-NPAST
       'Taroo often drinks milk.'

(4)   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 language use of the present perfect or simple past, as seen in (5) and (6).

(5)   Moo   tabe-ta?
       already eat-PAST
       'Have you eaten yet?'

(6)   Watashi wa   senshuu   hanbaagaa o   tabe-ta.
       I   TOP last week hamburger OBJ   eat-PAST
       'Last week I ate a hamburger.'

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[1] See Hasegawa (1998).
[2] The forms *-u* and *-da* as seen in these example sentences are allomorphs of the *-ru* and *-ta* forms, respectively.

However, this does not hold true in all cases. Kunihiro (1967) has outlined 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. These uses may, however, be viewed as semantic extensions of the original function of *-ta*. The following list is as summarized by Soga (1983:38-39) and Hasegawa (1998). The example sentences are Hasegawa's, but the glossing is my own. The *ta*-form can express or describe:

1. a past action or state,

(7)   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,

(8)   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,

(9)   Kaeru to   sugu ni   te   o   arat-ta
      return 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,

(10)   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,

(11)   A, soko ni   i-ta   no
       oh there LOC be-PAST FP
       'Oh, there you are!'

6. the recall of a future event,

(12)   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,

(13)   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,

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

9. and, finally, a command.

(15) 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 (15) which shall be the focus of this paper. However, as shall be shown in Chapter 4, imperative *-ta* is related to the other modal uses of the *ta-* form, in particular to the use illustrated in (14), and can not 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 "pure" imperative (from this point onward referred to as the *-e* (*ro*) imperative), but also (and more often) by a variety of circumlocutions (Martin 1988:959). The imperative most directly corresponding to imperative *-ta* is, however, the *-e* (*ro*) imperative.

(16) 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.

(17) Chotto, kore tot-te.
     little   this take-GER
     'Hold this for a while.'

(18) Kuruma kashi-te   kur-e.
     car   lend-GER give-IMP
     'Lend me your car.'

(19) Dondon tabe-te   kudasa-i.
     heartily eat-GER give-IMP (HON)
     'Feel free to eat!'

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

(20)   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.

(21)   Chanto   benkyoo shi-nasai   ne!
        properly study   do-POLITIMP FP
        'Make sure to study properly!'

(22)   Akirame-ro   yo!
        give.up-IMP FP
        'Give up!'

(23)   Hayaku miruku wo   nom-e   zo!
        quickly milk   OBJ drink-IMP FP
        'Drink the milk quickly!'

Negative commands expressing a level of politeness (or lack of such) comparable to the use of the -*e* (*ro*) imperative are typically expressed through the adding of the particle *na* 'don't' to the basic -*ru* form of the verb. Martin (1988:966) does not consider this form to be a negation of the imperative, explaining that it is, rather, a way in which "we extend our nuclear sentence", the reason being that "Since negatives are adjectivals, an imperative can not be made from them in colloquial Japanese". Nonetheless, the form functions as an informal negated imperative and may for all intents and purposes be regarded as one.

(24)   Sonna koto wo   su-ru   na!
        such   thing OBJ do-NPAST NIMP
        'Don't do such things!'

The *-te* form imperative construction 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.

(25)　Uso 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*.

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

(27)　Mada tabe-nai-de　　kudasa-i!
　　　yet　　eat-NEG-GER give (HON)-IMP
　　　'Please don't eat yet!'

　　　The *-ru* form may, under certain conditions, itself be used to express orders and commands. This form of imperative construction is often used while giving instructions and describing procedures and this is described as its main function by Takagi (1999:72).

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

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

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

(30)　Ryooshin wo　sonkei su-ru mono da!
　　　parent　　OBJ respect do-NPAST COP
　　　'Respect your parents!'

Although there are more 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.

(31)   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 se, especially limited in this regard.

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.

Chapter 3
Describing imperative *-ta*

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the properties of imperative *-ta* are outlined. First a brief overview of previous research on the topic is given. The general properties of imperative *-ta* are then described with a focus on the differences in usage between the construction and other imperative constructions available to Japanese speakers. The differences consist mainly of restrictions on the usage of imperative *-ta* which do not apply to other imperative constructions. These restrictions are discussed in the final section of this chapter.

3.2 Previous descriptions

The phenomenon of imperative *-ta* has been previously touched upon by various Japanese linguists, although most often merely as a passing example of non-past uses of the *-ta* verbal suffix. Kindaichi (1953: 227) contested the view of Yamada (1936) that the phenomenon of imperative *-ta* illustrates that *-ta* is not primarily a past tense marker, choosing instead to classify its use as irregular, and being that of a *fuhenkajodooshi* ("non-inflecting auxiliary verb"). 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".[3] Martin (1988: 966) mentions it only briefly, and I am not currently aware of the existence of an exhaustive description of the phenomenon. 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.

3.3 General properties of imperative *-ta*

Before a more detailed description of imperative *-ta* is given, three statements shall be made as to its fundamental characteristics as to quickly familiarize the reader. These statements are:

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[3]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.

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 existing imperative construction (such as the -*te* or -*e* (*ro*) constructions mentioned in chapter 2), but instead originally derived from the perfect (or 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* and 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.

The phenomenon of imperative -*ta* might first be introduced to the non-native speaker of Japanese through the cry of the *yaoya* or grocery salesman, encouraging potential customers to buy his wares:

(32)   Saa, banana kat-ta,   kat-ta!
        well banana buy-PAST buy-PAST
        'Bananas for sale!'

Alternatively, through the traditional cry of the sumo judge or *gyooji,* encouraging the wrestlers to fight hard and stay in the ring:

(33)   Hakkeyoi[4], nokot-ta   nokot-ta!
        go   remain-PAST remain-PAST
        'Hang in there!'

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[4] Interjection used to encourage clinching wrestlers.

Or (as most probably seen in a gangster- or samurai movie) through the cry of the *choohan*[5] dealer, informing the gamblers that the time has come to make a bet:

(34)   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:

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

(36)   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 *yaoya* and the *gyooji*, this can not 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 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.

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

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[5] A form of gambling involving dice.

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

There is a tendency for verbs used in imperative *-ta* sentences to be intransitive and voluntary. If the verb is transitive, ellipsis of the object is common. The verbs used tend towards basic, non-abstract 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.

(39)   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.

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

(41)   Kai- owat- ta   yatsu wa   totto 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 can not be used. This corresponds to what Hirata has said about the speaker wanting an "immediate reaction and a result from the hearer".

(42)   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.

(43)   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.

(44)   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 3.4.

(45)   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 iru* may also not be used.

The significance of this shall also be discussed further.

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

     The verbal auxiliaries *-te iku* and *-te kuru*, in this case used to express movement of the

hearer relative to the speaker, may be used in relative *-ta* sentences.

(47)   De-te   ik-e/   it-ta!
        go.out-GER go-IMP/go-PAST
        'Get out!'

In such cases, the past tense form of the auxiliary verb *iku, itta* is typically contracted to *-tta.*

(48)   Hora, de-te-tta   de-te-tta!
          hey   go.out-GER-go-PAST go.out-GER-go-PAST
          'Hey, get out!'

As noted by both my informant and myself, the phenomenon of iterated imperatives is exceedingly 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*.[6]

(49)   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!'

Although iteration of imperatives for the purpose of emphasis is not exclusive to Japanese (existing in English as well), there is here a feature worth noting: in the case of *suru* verbs (a category of Japanese verbs consisting of nouns, often Sino-Japanese in origin, functioning as verbals through the use of the verbal auxiliary *suru,* 'to do'), only the verb itself is repeated, not the noun. The tendency to repeat only the verb and not, for instance, the direct object of the verb appears to hold true for all constructions involving imperative *-ta*, but the fact that only the verb *suru* is iterated in the case of *suru* verbs seems to indicate that the Sino-Japanese noun is somehow regarded not as fully part of the verb and perhaps analogous to a direct object.

(50)   Moo   anta ossan   da   kara,   totto to   intai   shi-ta   shi-ta!
          Already you old man COP because at once   retirement do-PAST do-PAST
          'You're an old man now! Go retire!'

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 my informer, I am willing to state that its use is comparatively rare. This may partly be due

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[6] 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.

to the highly specific circumstances under which it is used (as described by Hirata), and partly because the construction itself, as related by my informer, is perceived as somewhat "funny", evoking images of pre-Meiji era Japan, and is seldom used among younger people (the informer himself is in his early twenties). On the occasions in which 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 middle aged people towards younger people with no humorous intent. However, as these are statements made by one individual informer, they should not be regarded as definitive.

3.4 Restrictions in usage

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.

(51)   Dok-e/   doi-ta!
           move.away-IMP/move.away-PAST
           'Get out of the way!'

(52)   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[7], 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

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[7] For example, informal imperative constructions or circumlocutions such as *-e* (*ro*) or *-nasai* may
not (or, rather, should not) be used towards people of higher seniority than the speaker. The impropriety resulting from such a use is, however, the result of a breach of social *mores* rather than an outright violation of Japanese grammar.

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.

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

1. The speaker in is a position to make an informal request of the hearer,
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 perform 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*.[8]

(53) *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*:

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[8] Interestingly, as pointed out by Larm (2006: 185), the *-e* (*ro*) imperative does not have this restriction. The following example sentence is as presented by Larm:

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

(54) 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.

(55) 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.

(56) Shukudai sh-iro   /?shi-ta shi-ta!
       homework do-IMP/ do-PAST do-PAST
        'Do your homework!'

(57) 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 (57), 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 shall now return to the matter of the range of verbs employed in imperative -*ta*.
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, every-day vocabulary. However, this is only tendency,
not a rule. Thus, as illustrated in (50), relatively formal vocabulary such as *intai suru* 'retire'
may be used in an imperative -*ta* construction given the existence of a fitting context. The fact
that most vocabulary employed in imperative -*ta* sentences is of an informal, everyday nature
can be explained by both the fact that imperative -*ta* because of its inherently informal nature
is most often used in such a context, and by the fact that 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

(58) ?Sengen   shi-ta   shi-ta!
      declaration do-PAST do-PAST
      'Make a declaration!'

seems unnatural if not provided with such a context, and because of the rarity of situations in everyday life in which a declaration needs to be prepared and held within a matter of seconds, it would thus be extraordinary if it were to be used in an imperative *-ta* sentence. Thus, a sentence such as (58) while technically grammatical is perceived as highly unnatural. However, even sentences such as the seemingly nonsensical

(59) ?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 the realm of fiction.

    It is worth noting that the reason it is hard to conceive of a context for (59) is not only the fact that fossilization takes a great deal of time, but also the fact that 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.

(60) 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.

(61)   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 (or similar entity) has appeared, and the speaker brusquely commands it to return to the realm of the dead. The choice of imperative -*ta* as opposed to the -*e* (*ro*) form imperative might here imply an admonishing tone, with the speaker being a priest (or exorcist) in a position of power greater than that of the ghost, thus corresponding to my first criterion that the speaker be in a position to make an informal request of the hearer, and also corresponding to Hirata's statement that the speaker "wants to show his power over the hearer". In any case, it seems that involuntary verbs must first be rendered voluntary through irregular contexts before they may be employed in an imperative -*ta* construction.

Takagi (1999:74) posits an intresting restriction to the use of imperative -*ta*, stating that it can not be used with predicates describing situations which can only be realized through the completion of not only one, but various processes. Thus, situations requiring complex circumstances to be realized before they may may occur, as examplified by the sentence **Saa, koibito ni natta natta!* (Presumably intended to mean) 'Become my lover!' can not be expressed through an imperative -*ta* command.

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

(62)   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.

Moving on from the restrictions in polarity to restrictions in aspect, it is interesting that Soga mentions the requirement that the verb in imperative -*ta* be "completive", the reason being that this requirement, although it is central to the phenomenon of imperative -*ta*, is so seldom mentioned in the literature that I, before reading Soga, believed that the connection

between imperative -ta and perfective aspect had only been acknowledged by myself. 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 iru 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 and imperfective aspect is semantically encoded in the verb. A perfective verb may be rendered imperfective by the use of the verbal auxiliary -te iru. Thus, imperative -ta denies the use of this construction.

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 chapter 2, 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.

(63) *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 (2006:189), does not allow the use of the "friendly" sentence final particle ne.[9] A different possible explanation is found in chapter 4.

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[9] The -e (ro) imperative does, however, allow the use of the sentence final particle yo, which similarly serves to soften the request made.

Chapter 4
Explaining imperative *-ta*

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the focus was on the usage of imperative *-ta* and the way in which this usage differs from other imperative constructions. In this chapter, the discussion focuses on the origin, structure and function of imperative *-ta*. We start with an overview of previous attempts at explaining why a past tense marker is sometimes used instead of an imperative marker. A description follows of the perfective marker that would evolve to become the *-ta* form of modern Japanese, namely the *-tari* of classical Japanese, and its use as an imperative. A final analysis of the connection between imperative *-ta* and the notion of perfective aspect is then given. A discussion of imperative *-ta* seen as a speech act then leads on to the formulation of a tentative hypothesis as to the nature of the speaker-hearer relationship manifested in imperative *-ta* sentences.

4.2 Previous research

Some statements have been made in the literature as to the structure of imperative *-ta*, the most substantive being those of Soga (1983) and Takagi (1999). Teramura (1982:341) states the following (as translated by me):

> 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.

Hirata (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 an interesting parallel to an phenomenon in Russian analogous to imperative *-ta*, in which the past tense forms of perfective verbs may be used as an imperative. The existence of this phenomenon has been confirmed to me by native speakers of Russian, but as I unfortunately have not as of this time been able to find any literature on the subject, an analysis of the phenomenon and how it corresponds to imperative *-ta* remains to be conducted.

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

> The structure of the *-ta* indirect command is evidently more complicated than that of the *-ru* indirect command.[10] 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"!

He further posits 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).' According to Soga, the underlying structure of the sentence is understood to be something similar to *Anata ga katta jootai ni aru* 'You are in the state of having bought it', with everything except for the verb *katta* 'bought' being deleted, and a high stressed pitch attaching 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, because of their high relevance to the present thesis, be discussed in 4.5.

4.3 The diachronic perspective, imperative *-ta* and perfectivity

Martin (1988:966), while discussing imperative *-ta*, states that Yoshida (1971) in his *Gendaigo jodooshi no shiteki kenkyuu* (Historical research on auxiliary verbs in modern language) claims that the use of the perfect marker *-tari* as an imperative was common in the Edo period. Unfortunately, due to time constraints it has not been possible to consult this work. Nonetheless, other references to imperative *-ta* being a remnant of the imperative use of the perfective suffix *-tari* exist in the literature, although these are most often tangential. The most substantive reference that I have been able to find is that of Kudoo (1985), who states that (as translated by me):

> Among (other) modals, there may exist cases in which the old meaning has been preserved (lit. 'fossilized') without a differention 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 classical Japanese which may be termed imperative *-tari*. A sentence such as

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[10] See (28).

(64) Saa saa, it-tari   it-tari!
      well   go-PRF   go-PRF
      'Go!'

in Edo-era (and possibly earlier) Japanese thus corresponds to the modern (although somewhat stuffy)

(65) 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 suffix is now filled by a past tense suffix, the reason being that the exclusively perfective suffix *-tari* over time developed into the *-ta* suffix, which, as seen in chapter 2, may express a wide range of past and present tense states (including the perfect).[11]

  We shall now take a look at the perfective suffix *-tari* itself. In classical Japanese, *-tari* is a suffix purely indicating perfect and distinct from past tense suffixes such as *-ki* and *-keri* (Sansom, 1928:177). However, Komai and Rohlich (1991:222) note that it may often be used in cases where a past tense marker may also be used. The following example sentence is adapted from a sentence used by them. The glossing has been added by me.

(66) Yamadera   ni yuk-i-tari/yu-keri
      mountain.temple to go-PRF   go-PAST
      'He has gone to the temple in the mountains.'

  Although it is beyond the scope of this paper, one may surmise that the existence of these overlapping fields of use was one of the reasons that the *-tari* suffix would eventually lose its strictly perfective use and develop into 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).

  The *-ta* of imperative *-ta* is thus not a (past) tense marker, but rather a preserved marker of (perfect) aspect. 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. Soga (1983:68) would seem to agree with me in this, stating that "[. . .] the *-ta* form for indirect command is

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[11] Although he associates the use of imperative *-ta* with pre-Meiji era Japan, my informant does not recognize the imperative use of *-tari.*

certainly aspectual [. . .]" The fact that -ta(ri) was used as an imperative while still strictly a perfect 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 4.5.

Teramura (1982:111) notes that Kindaichi (1953) classified the -ta in imperative -ta as not being contrasted with the non-past -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 iru 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 to 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 iru auxiliary can be viewed as intrinsically imperfective. As we have previously seen, imperative -ta can not be used together with -te iru constructions, regardless of their being progressive, resultative, or stative in aspect.

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:

(67) Go jikan hatarai-ta/hatarai-te it-a.
      five hour work-NPAST/work-GER be-NPAST
      'He worked for five hours.'

(68) Go fun mat-e   /mat-te i-ro!
      five minute wait-IMP/ wait-GER be-IMP
      'Wait for five minutes!'

I posit 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.

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

(70)   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 mean strictly '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. In this manner some imperfective verbs may be used in imperative *-ta* sentences.

4.4 Imperative *-ta* and speech acts

From a strictly grammatical point of view, an imperative *-ta* 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 (on the part of the speaker) is not to inform the hearer that he just has bought a banana, but rather to make him buy one in the immediate future. 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. 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 perfect marker instead of an imperative marker), it can be said to constitute an indirect speech act. In this manner, it is similar to the use of the *-ru* form to express a command as seen in (28).

For a speech act to be successful (in the case of imperative *-ta*, for the sentence to be interpreted as a command by the hearer), certain circumstances are required. These circumstances are termed "felicity conditions". Takagi (1999:75) defines the felicity conditions of an imperative *-ta* statement thus (as translated by me):

1. The proposition P is made as to the hearer's future action A.

2. The speaker believes that the hearer can perform A.

3. The speaker wishes that the hearer perform A.

4. The speaker is attempting to make the hearer perform A.

4.5 The function of imperative -*ta*: A tentative hypothesis

We return now to one of the uses of -*ta* as seen in chapter 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*".

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

In using advance -*ta*, the speaker expresses his conviction than an event shall come to pass by referring to it as if it already has. In the case of (70), a plausible context might be that a sports fan is watching his favourite team play, and realizes that although the game is not yet over, the team has no chance of winning. The aspect of the verb is that of the perfect, focusing on the future results of the soon-to-be-completed event that is currently occurring. Thus, an alternative translation would be 'We shall have lost!'. The construction may also be used to announce the speaker's intentions, as seen in (14).

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 salient 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 constructions have in common that they are associated with the expression of emotion on the part of the speaker. As described by Hirata (1987: 58), advance -*ta* can be 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), as quoted in Hasegawa (1998) states the following (the italics are presumably Soga's):

> If the past tense form is used, it indicates that the speaker perceives the situation to be remote, but if the non-past 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 non-past tense suggests the speaker's subjective and psychological involvement with the situation. [. . .] the difference in use between past and non-past 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 posit that the modal use (in expressing certainty) of imperative and advance -*ta* is derived, not from tense as Soga here seems to imply, but rather from the perfect and/or 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. 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 an impression of detachment and objectivity. 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 wares. It would thus seem that imperative -*ta* here can not 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 the speaker's 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 the phenomenon of imperative -*ta*. I posit that the structure of an imperative -*ta* sentence should not be understood as

(71)   (Anata ga) kat-ta   kat-ta!
        you   SBJ buy-PAST buy-PAST
        'Buy it!' lit. (You have bought it!)

but rather as:

(72)   (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 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". I consider this statement to hold 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 marked tendency, in the Japanese language, to avoid situations in which definite statements are made about a person's feelings and intentions,[12] and this may account for the rudeness associated with imperative *-ta*. The view that the speaker is, in fact, dictating the contents of the speaker's mind would also account for the fact that 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

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[12] For example, the auxiliary verb *-tagaru* is used when referring to the emotions of a person other than the speaker or hearer, signifying that, although a person seems to display a certain emotion, the reality of his/her experience can not be definitively known. Compare *Haha ga kanashitagaru* 'My mother is (seems) sad' and *Haha ga kanashii* 'I feel sad about my mother'.

particles as markers of illocutionary force.[13] 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.[14] 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

(39)   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. Although not impossible, 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. Difficult to explain is also the pitch used in imperative *-ta* sentences. If it were truly an "advance *-ta* by proxy", one might expect it to be spoken more like an interjection rather than in the sharp tone of a command. Because of the limited scope of the present paper, these questions must for the moment remain unanswered.

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[13] as in, for example: *Itai yo!* 'It hurts, I tell you!'
[14] Takahashi (1985: 213) appears to present sentences such as *Warui kedo, ore, shibaraku kyuuka moratta yo* 'Sorry, but I am going on vacation for a while' as comparable to advance *-ta* sentences. Although non-past *-ta* constructions of this type may take sentence final particles, I do not concider them to be advance *-ta* constructions, and therefore they are excluded from this analysis.

Conclusion

During the writing of this paper, it has become clear that imperative *-ta*, while at first seemingly an imperative using a past tense form, neither uses a past tense form (the *-ta* suffix expressing instead the "fossilized perfect") nor can be strictly called an imperative.

My position may be summarized as follows: the *-ta*(*ri*) suffix, when used in the non-past *ta*-form constructions described, expresses a notion of perfect (or completive) aspect rather than past tense. From this is derived a modal function, expressing certainty in the imminent realization of a situation. This is seen in advance *-ta*. A speaker may encourage a hearer to realize such a situation through use of "advance *-ta* by proxy", that is to say imperative *-ta*. A comparison of imperative *-ta* with various imperative constructions in Japanese is thus somewhat beside the point, as it relates far more directly to other modal constructions using aspect marking suffixes.

Imperative *-ta* is only one of various modal constructions using the past and non-past verbal suffixes in Japanese, and an analysis of just one of them separate from the whole, as is performed in this paper, does not serve to provide a full understanding of its function.

Although some insights into the nature of imperative *-ta* have been attained through the course of writing this paper, many problems need further research. Specifically, the relation of perfect and perfective aspect, the notion of completion and finality of an act, and the relation of the notion of certainty to the directive function as seen in imperative *-ta* need to be further investigated. A comparison of the Russian past tense imperative use of perfective verbs and Japanese imperative *-ta* also remains to be performed. Furthermore, the origin of *-ta* in the perfect marker *-tari* should be investigated more thoroughly. A survey of imperative *-ta* constructions in various dialects of Japanese would also be interesting.

Unfortunately, due to time constraints, several important works related to the topic at hand could not be consulted during the writing of this paper. In any future paper on the topic of imperative *-ta*, both the scope of the analysis and the breadth of literature consulted shall have to be more extensive.

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