A contrastive analysis of Japanese and French/English exhortative sentences expressing an injunctive meaning

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1 Introduction

In ordinary exhortative, like "Let's go!", the agent of the action is both the speaker and the addressee. Japanese, French and English exhortative forms may however be used when only the addressee is the agent, as in (1a-c). I call this construction "imperative exhortative" in what follows. As for French and English cases, Togeby (1982a: 392) and Jespersen 1924: 217-218) point out their "paternal" nature, by observing that this construction should be uttered by a superior (e.g. a doctor, an adult) to an inferior (e.g. a patient, a child). While Miyazaki et al. (2002: 30-31) give a similar remark to Japanese injunctive exhortative, Yuuki Tanaka (p.c.) and an anonymous reviewer observe that it may be uttered in Japanese without any social hierarchy between the interlocutors. In effect, many informants accept (1d) when it is uttered either from the wife to her husband or from the husband to his wife.

(1)a. kono kusuri-o non-demi-mas-yoo[1] [from a doctor to a patient]
this medecine-ACC take-try-POL-EXH
'Let's try taking this medicine.' (https://president.jp/articles/-/86846?page=1#google_vignette)

b. Ne rions pas tant, s'il vous plaît! [from the father to his children]
NEG laugh.IMP.1PL NEG so much if it you-please
'Let's not laugh so much, please! (Daudet/ Togeby 1982b: 53)

c. Let's stop chatter and get on with **our** little essays. [from a teacher to her students]
(Brown & Levinson 1987: 119)

d. kono kusuri-o non-demi-yoo yo
this medecine-ACC take-try-POL-EXH SFP
'Let's try taking this medicine, I insist.' [from a wife to her husband, or conversely]

(2)a. kimi-no besuto-o tukus-oo. [uttered by a prep school teacher to the students]
2SG-GEN best-ACC do-EXH
'Let's do your best.' (https://gants-toshin.com/wa/files/66062e9859ce4.pdf)

b. Faisons de {**notre**/*ton} mieux ! '(*lit.*) Let's do {**our**/*your} best!'

Another difference between Japanese and French/English injunctive exhortatives is that the former allows the 2nd person possessive pronoun, as in (2a), while the latter requires the 1st person plural form, as in (2b). The same is true for English in (1c), which is naturally uttered by a teacher to her students and where the DP *our little essays* denotes the students' essays.

This study examines how an exhortative conveys an injunctive meaning and how the difference between Japanese and French/English types comes about. In what follows, after reviewing previous studies (§2), I propose that matrix imperative and exhortative should be analyzed in terms of *commitment,* defined as a three-place predicate, and that, although both

[1] The abbreviations used are as follows: 1 = first person; 2 = second person; ACC = accusative; COMP = complementizer; COP = copular; EXH = exhortative; GEN = genitive; IMP = imperative; NOM = nominative; NMLZ = nominalizer; PL = plural; POL = politeness marker; PRM = promissive; PROG = progressive; PST = past; SFP = sentence final particlE; SG = singular; TOP = topic.

types are imperatives in view of their discourse update, the conversational community is presented i) as Committor in Japanese type for negative politeness, and ii) as Commissee in French/English type for positive politeness (§3). §4 summarizes the results of this study.

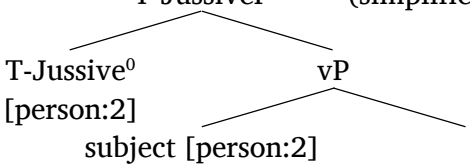
2 Previous studies

This section reviews relevant previous analyses: i) Zanuttini et al.'s (2012) idea of Jussive Phrase and its extension by Seo & Hoe (2015), who refer to the notion of *Point-of-Viewer* (2.1); ii) Stegovec's (2019) analysis of imperative and exhortative in terms of *perspective PRO* (2.2); iii) Portner *et al.*' (2018) idea of a cP projection regulating Speaker-Addressee relation and the notions of *deontic status* and *deontic authority* proposed in the field of conversational analysis, which turn out to be useful to analyze an imperative exhortative (2.3).

2.1 Zanuttini et al.'s (2012) JussiveP and its extension by Seo & Hoe (2015)

Zanuttini et al. (2012) claim that jussive sentences, including promissive, imperative and exhortative, consist of JussiveP whose head bears a person feature requiring an agreement (respectively, [1], [2] and [1⊕2]) and merges with the head of TP. The T-Jussive head permits only one person feature. This feature agrees with the vP subject structurally the nearest from the T-Jussive head, as in (3), which expresses the structure of an imperative. Furthermore, a bound pronoun c-commanded by the T-Jussive head should have the same person feature. This is illustrated in the English imperative "Wash yourself, won't you!" (*idem.* 1238).

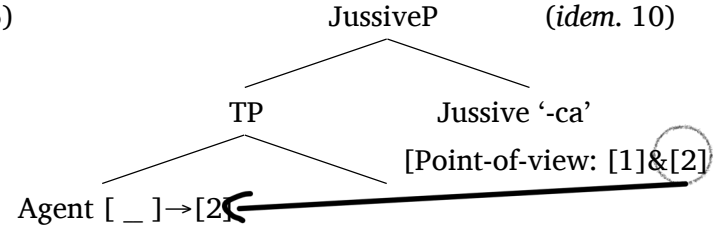
(3) T-JussiveP (simplified from Zanuttini et al. 2012: 1246)



(4) Ney-ka cemsim-ul sa-ca. (Seo & Hoe 2015: 3)
2SG-NOM lunch-ACC buy-EXH
'Let's you buy lunch / (I wish) you will buy lunch under our agreement.'

Seo & Hoe (2015) observe that Korean exhortative may express an injunctive meaning with the 2nd person singular subject, as in (4), and account for this use, extending Zanuttini et al.'s (2012) analysis. Seo & Hoe (2015: 7-8) first propose that "a person feature of Jussive head refers to a Point-of-Viewer [=POV] which is differentiated from the Agent", and that it "regulates a conversational participant whose perspective is related to commands". They next claim that it is possible that "a person feature on a Jussive head does not control the Agent [merged in Spec-TP] directly", and that "only one of the first and second person features originating in Exhortative heads [may] take part in Agreement as an independent probe". This process, called "subset probing", is represented in (5). Here, "the POVs are both specified by the 1st and 2nd person, and they are morphologically realized as *-ca*. However, only the [second]-person feature participates in Agreeing with a specifier of TP […] and the Agent becomes an author despite the presence of the Jussive head bearing [1]&[2]".

(5) JussiveP (*idem.* 10)



This approach faces at least two problems. First, when applied to Japanese and French/English cases, it doesn't account for the difference as regards the possessive in (2a-b): in the case of "subset probing", we may assume that the possessive has the same person feature as the Jussive head, or as the TP subject. These two possibilities are illustrated by French/English and Japanese. But it is not clear where the difference comes from. Second, the notion of their POV is not coherent: according to Seo & Hoe (2015: 9), in (a) promissive, (b) imperative and (c) exhortative, the POV feature is respectively specified by (a) the speaker's benefit and obligation, (b) the addressee's obligation and (c) both the speaker's and the addressee's benefit. In Section 3, I will propose an analysis according to which Seo & Hoe's POV feature [1⊕2] is attributed to different elements in Japanese and French/English injunctive exhortative.

2.2 Stegovec's (2019) analysis in terms of perspective PRO

Stegovec (2019) syntactically and semantically clarifies the notion of perspective in the three types of jussive sentences. Adopting a modal approach to imperative and exhortative, he proposes that the specifier position of MoodP (whose head is occupied by the directive operator corresponding to English *should*) hosts a perspectival PRO, which functions as the center of perspective for the conversational background, as in (6a).

(6)a. $[_{CP}$ C $[_{MoodP}$ PRO_i $[_{Mood'}$ OP_{dir} $[_{TP}$ pro_j $[_{vP}$ t_j…]]]]] (Stegovec 2019: 60) [IMP/EXH]

b. $[_{CP}$ C $[_{MoodP}$ PRO_i $[_{Mood'}$ OP_{dir} $[_{TP}$ t_j $[_{vP}$ t_j…]]]]] (*idem*.87) [PRM]

c. $[[\text{COMMIT}]]^{c,g} = \lambda P_{<e,<s,t>>}: \forall_{<w',y>}[_{<w',y>} \in \text{Dox}_{sp(c),w(c)} \rightarrow P(y)(w')]$ (*idem*. 74)

The perspectival PRO corresponds to the *director* "which is the locus of public commitment [so as] to make the prejacent true" (*idem*. 60). The *pro* in (6a) represents the *instigator* (i.e. the agent of the action), which is merged in Spec-vP and moves to Spec-TP in imperative and exhortative. In promissive, the perspectival PRO is merged in Spec-vP and moves to Spec-TP and to Spec-MoodP, as in (6b). Stegovec (2019: 80) also claims that in the case of matrix jussive sentences, the context update of an imperative is carried out by an implicit COMMIT operator, represented in (6c), which binds the perspective PRO, which is then coindexed with the speaker. He further notes that "the current proposal rests on PRO_{pers} being parallel to *PRO* in infinitive, apart from not being the subject of the clause" (*idem*. 76) and that the COMMIT operator is a kind of attitude predicate and "what makes COMMIT different from an attitude predicate is that, syntactically, the latter may introduce a different person feature […] depending on the attitude holder/subject while COMMIT is restricted to introducing 1P [i.e. the 1st person]" (*idem*. 74). When an imperative is embedded under an attitude predicate, as in (7a), the perspectival PRO is bound by the attitude holder, as in (7b). Without a COMMIT operator, the embedded imperative is not performative and expresses a wish (Hirose 2024:26).

(7)a. [(titi-ga) iru toki-wa [hayaku kae-re to] omot-tei-ta
father-NOM be when-TOP early go.out-IMP COMP think-PROG-PST
'When my father was there, I thought that he should go out early.' (Hirose 2024:29)

b. I_j thought $[_{CP}$ C $[_{MoodP}$ PRO_j $[_{Mood'}$ OP_{dir} $[_{TP}$ he_k $[_{vP}$ t_k go out]]]]]

Stegovec's (2019) COMMIT operator may be considered as a semantic counterpart of Zanuttini et al.'s (2012) Jussive head[2]: Committor's perspective is expressed by the perspectival PRO, just as the Point-of-view is conveyed by Jussive head according to Seo & Hoe (2015). From this perspective, in cases like (1a-c), Committor (=director) would be the conversational

[2] Zanuttini et al. (2012: 1264) effectively note that "If we were to adopt the view that imperative sentences contain an illocutionary operator in a high functional projection, it would be natural to identify the head of this projection with the head of the JussiveP".

community. It is however not clear how this situation is handled by Stegovec, for whom Committor remains the 1st person, let alone how to account for the difference regarding the possessive in (2a-b). Furthermore, Stegovec's COMMIT operator is a two-place predicate, taking Committor and a proposition, while as claimed by Geurts (2019: 4), a commitment, which is a social relation, should be analyzed as a three-place predicate, taking Committor, Commissee and a proposition. In Section 3, essentially adopting Stegovec's analysis of imperative and exhortative, I propose to redefine his COMMIT operator as a three-place predicate, so as to account for the difference concerning possessive expressions, as in (2a-b).

2.3 Portner et al.'s (2018) cP regulating Speaker-Addressee relation

As noted above, the exhortative form may convey an injunctive meaning when an asymmetrical social status is observed between the interlocutors at least in French and English. Another example of such a social meaning is the use of the plural form, like French *vous*, suggesting a formal style, which contrasts with the singular *tu* indicating a familiar style. It should be noted that, even if the plural form is used to refer to the unique addressee, the oneness of the referent is linguistically coded by the agreement of the predicate, as in "Vous êtes belle" ('You are beautiful [showing a singular and feminine agreement]'). Now, on the one hand, Portner et al. (2018) propose a projection cP which regulates Speaker-Addressee relation: thus, when the singular *tu* is chosen, the cP head bears a feature [social status: Sp ≥ Ad]. On the other hand, Potts (2007) and McCready (2019) analyze such a social meaning as "expressive", calculated independently from the truth-conditional at-issue meaning. But they all agree to recognize its flexibility (e.g. the speaker can switch, during a conversation, her *tu/vous* choice to express her intimacy or praise towards the addressee) and its performative nature: according to McCready (2019: 110), "the honorific aspect of Japanese 1st and 2nd person pronouns [indicates] speaker expectations and commitments relating to the social behavior of the conversational participants". Since the social status relevant in an injunctive exhortative is closely connected to the nature of the denoted action (e.g. the doctor might not use an injunctive exhortative to tell the patient to enter the exam room), I adopt, in what follows, the approach in terms of cP rather than the one in terms of expressive meaning, which is considered as fundamentally distinct from the descriptive meaning.

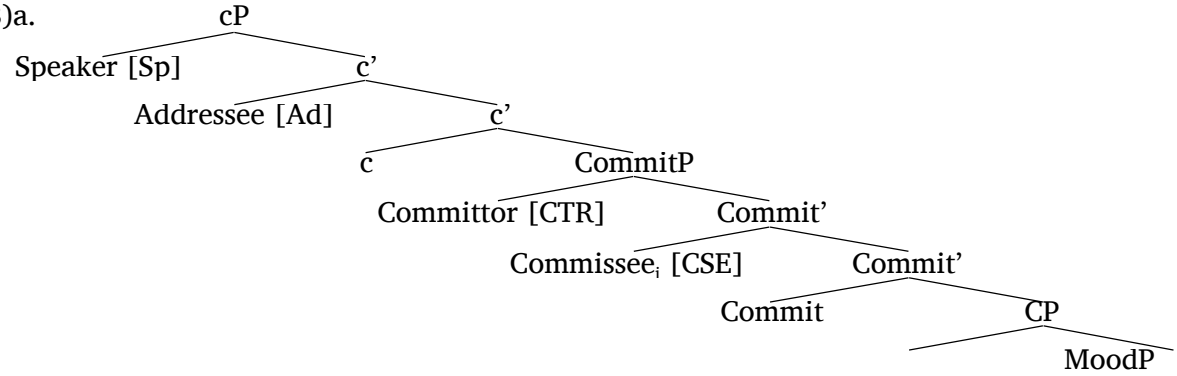
To elucidate the nature of the status relevant in an injunctive exhortative, the discussion in the field of conversational analysis is instructive. Stevanovic & Peräkylä (2012) show that the discourse participants constantly negotiate who has the right to decide their own or others' future actions. Such a right is called "deontic authority" (*idem*. 297). A related notion, **"**deontic status**"** refers to a person's rights in a specific domain of action that is relevant for the participants' ongoing action" (Stevanovic 2023: 1). Kushida (2018) observes that a doctor presents herself as having a different deontic status with respect to the same patient by shifting between imperative and exhortative forms, depending on the consulting situation. In Section 3, I will propose that the status regulating Speaker-Addressee relation in an injunctive exhortative is exactly the deontic status as regards the addressee's action, but in a different way in Japanese and French/English cases.

3 Proposal

Taking into account the previous studies reviewed in Section 2, I first propose a basic structure (8a) of the three jussive sentences in matrix clauses: a cP (regulating Speaker-Addressee relation) takes as its complement a CommitP (a three-place predicate), which in turn takes as its complement a CP à la Stegovec (2019). I next propose, slightly modifying Stegovec's idea,

that TP subject (instigator) is co-indexed with i) Committor (director) in promissive; ii) Commissee in imperative; iii) the sum of Committor and Commissee in ordinary exhortative. I further propose that Committor and Commissee are pronominal elements, which are respectively co-indexed with the speaker and the addressee by default, i.e. when the cP head doesn't bare any special feature[3], as in (8b). The speaker-Committor is responsible for accounting for the basis of her commitment and should behave in accordance with her commitment; the addressee-Commissee has a right, as the next committor, to accept or reject the speaker's commitment. They are morphologically instantiated as the 1st or 2nd person respectively. The perspectival PRO (director) is co-indexed with Committor.

(8)a.



b. $[_{cP}\ Sp_j\ [_{c'}\ Ad_k\ [_{c'}\ c\ [_{CommitP}\ CTR_j\ [_{Commit'}\ CSE_k\ [_{Commit'}\ Commit\ [_{CP}\ C\ [_{MoodP}\ PRO_j\ [_{Moodd'}\ OP_{dir}\ [_{TP}\ \{t_j/pro_k/pro_{j+k}\}[_{vP}\ \{t_j/t_k/t_{j+k}\}]]]]]]]$ (default cases of the three jussive sentences)

(9)A: kono kusuri-o {non-demi-mas-yoo / non-demi-tekudasi}
this medecine-ACC take-try-POL-EXH / take-try-please.do
'Let's try taking this medicine / Please try taking this medicine.'

B: hai non-demi-masu. / Iya, ki-ga susumi-mase-n.
Yes take-try-POL / No mind-NOM move.forward-POL-NEG
'Ok, I will take it. / Non, I don't feel like it.'

(10)A: Essayons de prendre ce médicament. / Essayez de prendre ce médicament.
'Let's try taking this medicine / Try taking this medicine.'

B: Ok, je le prendrai. / Non, je ne veux pas.
'Ok, I will take it. / No, I would not like to.'

Before examining the injunctive exhortative in the three languages, I draw attention to the fact that it is replied in the same way as an imperative, as illustrated in (9) and (10). This means that its discourse update is the same as that of an imperative, which boils down to saying that the TP subject (instigator) is co-indexed with Commissee in an injunctive exhortative as well as in an imperative. I now tackle Japanese injunctive exhortative based on these hypotheses in the next subsection.

3.1 Japanese injunctive exhortative as a negative polarity strategy

I first propose that Japanese injunctive exhortative is chosen by the speaker as a negative politeness strategy to propose that not only the speaker, but also the addressee (sometimes fictionally) have a deontic authority to decide the latter's future action: the cP head bears a feature [deontic status: Sp ≤ Ad]. Thus, the use of injunctive exhortative in (1a) suggests that the doctor's deontic status with respect to the patient's decision is equal to or smaller than the patient's one. I further propose that this feature in the cP head leads to the co-indexation between Committor and the conversational community, which is also co-indexed with the

[3] For the moment, I cannot account for how this co-indexation is realized.

perspectival PRO (director), as in (11)[4]. As shown above, from the perspective of discourse update, the imperative exhortative is equivalent to an imperative, where the TP subject (instigator) is co-indexed with Commissee, which is co-indexed with the addressee. Therefore, a possessive pronoun c-commanded by the TP subject takes the form of the 2nd person.

(11) $[_{cP}\ Sp_j\ [_{c'}\ Ad_k\ [_{c'}$ c (deontic status: Sp ≤ Ad)] $[_{CommitP}\ CTR_{j+k}\ [_{Commit'}\ CSE_k\ [_{Commit'}$ Commit $[_{CP}$ C $[_{MoodP}\ PRO_{j+k}$(director)$[_{Mood'}\ OP_{dir}\ [_{TP}\ pro_k$(instigator) … possessive$_k$]]]]

(12)a. [(titi-ga) iru toki-wa [hayaku kae-re to] omot-tei-ta
father-NOM be when-TOP early go.out-IMP COMP think-PROG-PST
'When my father was there, I thought that he should go out early.' (=(7a))

b. I_j thought $[_{CP}$ C $[_{MoodP}\ PRO_j\ [_{Mood'}\ OP_{dir}\ [_{TP}\ he_k\ [_{vP}\ t_k$ go out]]]]]

(13) [kimi-no besuto-o {tukus-e /*tukus-oo] to omot-tei-ta-n-da.
2SG-GEN best-ACC do-IMP / do-EXH COMP think-PROG-PST-NMLZ-COP
'I was thinking {you / *we} should do your best.' (Soichiro Kinoshita, pc)

Accordding to this analysis, the speaker presents herself only as a partial Committor (director), while she presents the addressee as full-fledged Commissee, instantiated by the 2nd person. The inclusion of the addressee in the director's position concerning her own action yields an effect of stimulating her motivation[5]. This hypothesis explains the observation that, unlike French/English imperative exhortative, Japanese one does not require a social asymmetry between the speaker and the addressee. It is also consonant with Nitta's (1991: 213) characterization of this construction as "mitigated command". Furthermore, as represented in (11), the co-indexation of the perspectival PRO (director) with the conversational community crucially depends on the presence of cP and CommitP. We thus predict that this construction cannot be embedded unlike an imperative, which may be deprived of cP and CommitP, as in (12a-b). This prediction turns out to be on the right track, as shown in (13). According to this analysis, Seo & Hoe's (2015) JussiveP is decomposed into cP and CommitP: their Point-of-Viewer bearing a [1]&[2] feature amounts to the perspectival PRO (director), co-indexed with the conversational community; their agent corresponds to the TP subject (instigator).

3.2 French and English injunctive exhortative as a positive polarity strategy

Let's next examine the French/English type. I first highlight the fact that, unlike in Japanese, the inclusive 1st person plural pronoun may denote the addressee in the TP subject position in French and English, as in (14a-c). The singular and feminine agreement shown by the adjective in (14c) indicates that, despite its morphology, the pronoun denotes the addressee alone, like the formal *vous*. As regards these examples, Togeby (1982b: 53) observes that this use of *nous* 'we' is motivated by "gentilesse (kindness)"; according to Quirk et al. (1985: 350), it "has an implication of sharing the problem with 'you' in the situational context of a doctor/patient or teacher/student relation"; Jespersen (1924: 217-218) calls this use "paternal *we*" and points out "kindness through identifying the interests of speaker and hearer". According to Brown & Levinson (1987: 118-119), it is one of positive politeness strategies. All these authors suggest that the same principle regulates this use of *nous/we* and the imperative exhortative.

[4] In the original version of this study, I claimed that Japanese injunctive exhortative is a pre-empted joint commitment, which consists of the speaker's imperative and her substituted promissive where she utters a promissive on behalf of the addressee. But, as pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, this analysis faces several problems, one of which is that, since a commitment is accompanied with a responsibility, if the student doesn't do her best in (2a), the teacher should be liable, which contradicts our intuition. These remarks led me to abandon my original analysis.

[5] This effect of Japanese injunctive exhortative is pointed out by Masaki Morimoto (p.c.).

(14)a. En fait de soins, **nous** avons surtout besoin de repos […] (a doctor to a patient)
'In terms of care, we especially need rest.' (Bazin/ Togeby 1982a: 392)
b. Well, and how are **we** today? (a doctor to a patient) (Jespersen 1924: 218)
c. Eh ! Mais **nous** sommes profonde. (a father to his daughter)
'Hey! But we are deep [singular, feminine].' (Monterlant/ Togeby 1982a: 392)

(15)a. $[_{cP}\ Sp_j\ [_{c'}\ Ad_k\ [_{c'}\ c$ (status: Sp > Ad)$[_{CommitP}\ CTR_j\ [_{Commit'}\ CSE_{j+k}[_{Commit'}$ Commit $[_{TP}\ pro_{j+k}$…]]]]
b. A (doctor): How are we today? — B (patient): I'm fine. / #We are fine.

To make sense of these remarks, I propose that this use of *nous/we* indicates that the speaker presents herself not only as Committor but also as the guardian of the addressee, while she presents the addressee not as a full-fledged Commissee (having a full right to accept or reject the speaker's commitment). In this case, the cP head bears a feature [status: Sp > Ad] and Commissee is co-indexed with the sum of the speaker and the addressee, and the TP subject receives the same co-indexation, as in (15a) (where MoodP is absent). It should be noted that the characterization of the addressee as a partial Commissee is only proposed by the speaker acting as her guardian, but may not be accepted by the addressee herself, as shown in (15b).

(16)a. Faisons de **notre** mieux! 'Let's do our best!' (=(2b))
b. $[_{cP}\ Sp_j\ [_{c'}\ Ad_k\ [_{c'}\ c$ (deontic status: Sp > Ad) $[_{CommitP}\ CTR_j\ [_{Commit'}\ CSE_{j+k}\ [_{Commit'}$ Commit $[_{CP}\ C\ [_{MoodP}\ PRO_j\ [_{Moodd'}\ OP_{dir}\ [_{TP}\ pro_{j+k}$… possessive$_{j+k}$]]]] (injunctive exhortative)

(17) Soyons patiente ! L'effet de ce médicament est lent. [from a doctor to a female patient]
'Let's be patient [singular and feminine]! The effect of this medicine is slow.'

Now, I propose that, in a similar way, French/English injunctive exhortative, as (16a), is represented by (16b): the cP head has a feature [deontic status: Sp > Ad], which leads to the co-indexation of Commissee with the sum of the speaker and the addressee, which is also co-indexed with the TP subject since an injunctive exhortative is equivalent to an imperative as regards its discourse update. A possessive pronoun c-commanded by the TP subject takes the 1st person plural form. Here too, despite its plural morphology, the TP subject *pro* referentially denotes the addressee alone, which is verified by the singular predicate agreement, as in (17). The perspectival PRO (director) is co-indexed with the speaker-Committor. According to this analysis, Seo & Hoe's (2015) Point-Of-Viewer bearing [1]&[2] feature corresponds not to Committor-perspectival PRO, but to Commissee in French and English cases.

4 Concluding remarks and remaining problems

Adopting Stegovec's (2019) analysis of an imperative in terms of the perspectival PRO (but redefining his CommiP as a three-place predicate) and Portner et al.'s (2018) cP regulating Speaker-Addressee relation, this study advocated the existence of three types of exhortative: i) the conversational community grammatically and semantically corresponds to the instigator of the denoted action in ordinary cases; ii) it is grammatically coded in Japanese, in view of negative politeness, as Committor (director) of the addressee's action; iii) it is grammatically coded in French and English, in view of positive politeness, as Commissee (instigator), although the predicate agreement indicates that semantically, the role of the instigator is assumed by the addressee alone. This contrastive analysis accounts for the fact that i) French and English injunctive exhortative requires a social asymmetry between the speaker and the addressee, which is not the case in Japanese one; ii) Japanese injunctive exhortative is compatible with the 2nd person possessive pronoun while French and English ones only allow the 1st person plural possessive pronoun; iii) the addressee may be referred by the 1st person plural pronoun in non-jussive sentences in French and English, but not in Japanese.

There remain problems, one of which is how to analyze the Korean example (18a), which may be qualified as "promissive exhortative", and where, despite the presence of the exhortative marker, the TP subject is the 1st person singular pronoun.

(18)a. Nay-ka cemsim-ul sa-ca. (Seo & Hoe 2015: 3)
I-NOM lunch-ACC buy-EXH
'Let's I buy lunch / (I wish) I will buy lunch under our agreement)'

b. $[_{cP}\ Sp_j\ [_{c'}\ Ad_k\ [_{c'}\ c$ (deontic status: Sp ≤ Ad) $[_{CommitP}\ CTR_{j+k}\ [_{Commit'}\ CSE_k\ [_{Commit'}$ Commit $[_{CP}\ C\ [_{MoodP}\ PRO_{j+k}$(director) $[_{Mood'}\ OP_{dir}\ [_{TP}\ pro_j$(instigator) T…]]]

One possible analysis is to represent this case by (18b), where Committor (director) is the conversational community, while the instigator is the speaker alone. Whether this analysis is on the right track is the subject of future study.

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