Zi-verbs in Japanese
Maki Kishida

1 Introduction

- We discuss the syntax of Sino-Japanese origin morphologically complex verbs (known as ‘zi-verbs’):

      John-Nom self-support-do
      ‘John, supports himself,’
  b. Tatemono-ga zi-kai-suru.
      building-Nom self-collapse-do
      ‘The building collapses (by itself).’

- Two types of zi-verb
  
  - cannot occur with an object argument as in (2a) \rightarrow Objectless zi-verbs [represented in (5a)]
  - can occur with an object argument as in (2b). \rightarrow Object-taking zi-verbs [in (5b)]

  (2) a.* John-ga musuko-o zi-ritu-si-ta.
      John-Nom son-Acc self-support-do-Past
      ‘John supported his son.’
      John-Nom son-Acc self-boasting-do-Past
      ‘John boasted about his son.’

  (3) Seminal work by Tsujimura and Aikawa (1999):
      All objectless zi-verbs are uniformly reflexive verbs with an unaccusative syntactic structure.

- Aim and Proposal:

  (4) a. We provide several syntactic and morphological arguments that a certain type of objectless zi-verb has an external argument, contrary to Tsujimura and Aikawa (1999).
    b. There are three types of objectless zi-verbs: transitive, unaccusative, and unergative.
    c. Zi-verbs with a transitive structure are reflexive verbs, while other types of zi-verb are not.
    d. The zi-morpheme is ambiguous:
        - argument zi-morpheme ‘self’ (transitive objectless zi-verbs)
        - adjunct zi-morpheme ‘by itself’ (unaccusative objectless zi-verbs)
        - adjunct zi-morpheme ‘by oneself’ (unergative objectless zi-verbs)

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*This is a joint work with Yosuke Sato @UBC.
1Tsujimura and Aikawa (1996, 1999) analyze the first type as ‘unaccusative zi-verbs’ and the second type as ‘imalienable possession zi-verbs.’
2 What are Zi-verbs?

- The zi-morpheme combines with a Sino-Japanese verbal noun and the light verb suru ‘do,’ and creates a complex predicate (Grimshaw and Mester, 1988).²

(5) a. **zi-ritu-suru** ‘self-support-do = support oneself,’ **zi-satu-suru** ‘kill oneself’
   **zi-ten-suru** ‘revolve around oneself,’ **zi-kai-suru** ‘demolish oneself’

b. **zi-man-suru** ‘boast oneself,’ **zi-kyoo-suru** ‘confess oneself’
   **zi-san-suru** ‘praise oneself,’ **zi-nin-suru** ‘admit oneself’

- The zi-morpheme is morphologically bound.

(6) *John-ga zi-o riitu-suru.  (6’) John-ga { *zi-o / zibun-o } yasinat-ta
   John-Nom self-Acc support-do   John-Nom { self-Acc / self-Acc } support-Past
   ‘Johni supported himself;’

- The Sino-Japanese verbal nouns cannot be used without the zi-morpheme.

(7) *John-ga zibun-o riitu-si-ta.
   John-Nom self-Acc support-do-Past
   ‘Johni supported himself;’

- The zi-++verbal noun complex cannot be inflected for tense by itself.

(8) *John-ga zi-ritu-ta.
   John-Nom self-support-Past
   ‘Johni supported himself;’

3 Tsujimura and Aikawa’s 1999 Uniform Un accusative Analysis


   John-Nom self-support-do-Past
   ‘Johni supported himself;’

b. [TP Johni-ga [vP · · · [vP · · · [vNP t₁ zi-ritu] si] · · ·] ta]

  – As is expected of unaccusative verbs in general, objectless zi-verbs cannot occur with direct objects.

²In sections 1-3, we gloss all the zi-morpheme as ‘self’ following Tsujimura and Aikawa (1999). The list in (5) is cited from their work.
• 1st diagnostic for unaccusativity: based on the distribution of Resultative phrases

Resultative phrases must be predicated of underlying direct objects.

(11) Unaccusative Hypothesis (Perlmutter, 1978):
An unaccusative verb takes its Theme argument as its underlying direct object.

(12) a. Ziroo-ga pan-o makkuro-ni yai-ta. [Transitive verb]
    Jiro-Nom bread-Acc black toast-Past
    ‘Jiro toasted the bread black.’

b. Pan-ga makkuro-ni yake-ta. [Unaccusative verb]
    bread-Nom black burn-Past
    ‘The bread burned black.’

c. Furui tatemono-ga konagona-ni zi-kai-sita. [Zi-verb]
    old building-Nom pieces-into self-demolish-Past
    ‘The old building demolished (itself) into pieces.’ (Tsujimura and Aikawa, 1999, 31f)

• 2nd diagnostic for unaccusativity: based on Numeral Quantifier Floating

(13) Miyagawa (1989b):
An NP and the quantifier that it is associated with must be in a mutual c-command relation.

(14) a. Gakusei-ga san-nin [VP ie-o kat-ta]. [Transitive verb]
    students-Nom three-CL house-Acc buy-Past

b. *Gakusei-ga [VP ie-o san-nin kat-ta].
    students-Nom house-Acc three-CL buy-Past
    ‘Three students bought a house.’

(15) a. Gakusei-ga san-nin [VP ie-e hasit-ta]. [Unergative verb]
    students-Nom three-CL house-toward run-Past

b. *Gakusei-ga [VP ie-e san-nin hasit-ta].
    students-Nom house-toward three-CL run-Past
    ‘Three students ran toward the house.’

(16) a. Gakusei-i-ga san-nin [VP ie-ni t\_i ki-ta]. [Unaccusative verb]
    students-Nom three-CL house-Goal come-Past

b. Gakusei-i-ga [VP ie-ni t\_i san-nin ki-ta].
    students-Nom house-Goal three-CL come-Past
    ‘Three students came into the house.’

(17) a. Gakusei-i-ga san-nin [VP ie -de t\_i zi-satu-sita]. [Zi-verb]
    students -Nom three-CL house -Loc self-killing-did

b. Gakusei-i-ga [VP ie -de t\_i san-nin zi-satu-sita].
    students -Nom house -Loc three-CL self-killing-did
    ‘Three students killed themselves in the house.’
4 Against the Uniform Unaccusative Analysis

- We provide five diagnostics for external argumenthood.
  
  - Some objectless *zi*-verbs, such as *zi-ritu-suru* ‘self-support-do, support oneself’ and *zi-satu-suru* ‘self-killing-do, kill oneself,’ have an external argument and cannot be unaccusative, contrary to Tsujimura & Aikawa (1999).
  
  - The 1st-4th diagnostics are based on Kageyama (1993), and the fifth one is on Kishimoto (2005).

- 1st diagnostic for external argumenthood: Only verbs with external arguments can be the first member of V+V compounds headed by *naosu* ‘redo.’

  (18) a. *kiki-naosu* ‘hear again,’ *tukuri-naosu* ‘make again’ [Transitive V + *naosu* ‘redo’]
  
  b. *suvari-naosu* ‘sit again,’ *ne-naosu* ‘sleep again’ [Unergative V + *naosu* ‘redo’]
  
  c. *korobi-naosu* ‘tumble again,’ *oti-naosu* ‘fall again’ [Unaccusative V + *naosu* ‘redo’]
  
  d. *zi-ritu-st-naosu* ‘support oneself again’ [Zi-V + *naosu* ‘redo’]

- 2nd diagnostic: The accusative case marker -o can be attached only with verbal nouns (VNs) that have external arguments when VNs occur with the light verb *suru* ‘do.’

  (19) Argument Transfer theory:
  
  The argument-taking property of VN is transferred into the empty θ-grid of the light verb *suru* ‘do.’ (Grimshaw and Mester, 1988)

  (20) Burzio’s generalization:
  
  Case is assigned to the object iff a θ-role is assigned to the subject. (Burzio, 1986, 178)

  (21) a. *kenkyu* (-o) *suru* research (-Acc) do ‘do research’ [Transitive VN]
  
  b. *rikon* (-o) *suru* divorce (-Acc) do ‘get divorced’ [Unergative VN]
  
  c. *sikyo* (*-o*) *suru* death (-Acc) do ‘die’ [Unaccusative VN]
  
  d. *zi-ritu* (-o) *suru* self-support (-Acc) do ‘support oneself’ [Zi-VN]
• 3rd diagnostic: Only external arguments of the base (non-passive) constructions can be marked with the dative case marker -ni in the derived indirect passive constructions.

(22) a. John-no tuma-ga hooseki-o kaw-ta. [Transitive V]  
John-Gen wife-Nom jewelry-Acc buy-Past  
‘John’s wife bought jewelry.’

b. John-wa tuma-ni hooseki-o kaw-are-ta. 
John-Top wife-Dat jewelry-Acc buy-Pass-Past  
‘John was adversely affected by having his wife buy jewelry.’

(23) a. John-no tuma-ga rikon-si-ta. [Unergative V]  
John-Gen wife-Nom divorce-do-Past  
‘His wife got divorced.’

b. John-wa tuma-ni rikon-s-are-ta  
John-Top wife-Dat divorce-do-Pass-Past  
‘John was adversely affected by having his wife getting divorced.’

(24) a. John-no tuma-ga sikyo-si-ta [Unaccusative V]  
John-Gen wife-Nom death-do-Past  
‘John’s wife died.’

b.*John-ga tuma-ni sikyo-s-are-ta  
John-Nom wife-Dat death-do-Pass-Past  
‘John was adversely affected by his wife die.’

(25) a. John-no tuma-ga zi-ritu-si-ta. [Zi-V]  
John-Gen wife-Nom self-support-do-Past  
‘John’s wife supported herself.’

John-Nom wife-Dat self-support-do-Pass-Past  
‘John was adversely affected by having his wife support herself.’

• 4th diagnostic: Only external arguments of the base constructions can be the subjects of the passivized causative constructions.

(26) a. Kantoku-ga kooti-ni sensyu-o kitaesase-ta. [Transitive V]  
manager-Nom coach-Dat players-Acc train-Caus-Past  
‘The manager made the coach train the players.’

coach-Nom manager-by players-Acc train-Caus-Pass-Past  
‘The coach was made to train the players by the manager.’

c.*Sensyu-ga kantoku-niyotte kooti-ni kitaesase-rare-ta.  
players-Nom manager-by coach-Dat train-Caus-Pass-Past  
‘The players were made to be trained by the coach by the manager.’
(27) a. Karera-no ryoozin-ga **hutari-o** rikon-s-ase-ta. [Unergative V]
   they-Gen parents-Nom two people-Acc divorce-do-Caus-Past
   ‘Their parents made the two get divorced.’

b. **Hutari-ga** karera-no ryoozin-niyotte rikon-s-ase-rare-ta.
   two people-Nom they-Gen parents-by divorce-do-Caus-Pass-Past
   ‘The couple was made to get divorced by their parents.’

(28) a. Isya-ga **kanzya-o** sikyo-s-ase-ta. [Unaccusative V]
   doctor-Nom patient-Acc death-do-Caus-Past
   ‘The doctor made the patient die.’

b. **Kanzya-ga** isya-niyotte sikyo-s-ase-rare-ta.
   patient-Nom doctor-by death-do-Caus-Pass-Past
   ‘The patient was made to die by the doctor.’

(29) a. Ryoozin-ga **John-o** zi-ritu-s-ase-ta. [Zi-V]
   parent-Nom John-Acc self-support-do-Caus-Past
   ‘His parents made John support herself.’

b. **John-ga** ryoozin-niyotte zi-ritu-s-ase-rare-ta.
   John-Nom parent-by self-support-do-Caus-Pass-Past
   ‘John was made to support himself by his parents.’

- 5th diagnostic: Underlying external arguments can be marked with the instrumental case marker -de as well as the nominative case marker -ga.

(30) a. Watasi-tati-ga/-de kore-o yari-masu. [Transitive V]
   I-PL -Nom/-with this-Acc do -Pol
   ‘We will do this.’

b. Watasi-tati-ga/-de iSSHOni asonda. [Unergative V]
   I-PL -Nom/-with together played
   ‘We played together.’

c. Atusa-notame, watasi-tati -ga/*-de taoreta. [Unaccusative V]
   heat-from I-PL -Nom/-with fell
   ‘We collapsed from heat.’

d. Oya-ni spinai-o kake-mai-to watasi-tati-ga/-de zi-ritu-si-ta. [Zi-V]
   parent-Dat worry-Acc incur-won’t-for I-PL -Nom/-with self-support-do-Past
   ‘We supported ourselves in order not to incur worries on our parents.’

⇒ The results of the five diagnostics demonstrate that a certain type of objectless zi-verb such as **zi-ritu-suru** ‘self-support-do’ have an external argument.

⇒ Tsujimura and Aikawa’s (1999) Uniform Unaccusative analysis of objectless zi-verb is not tenable.
5 Proposal

5.1 Objectless \( z\)-Verbs with a Hidden Transitive structure

- Objectless \( z\)-verbs such as \( zi-\text{ritu-suru} \) ‘support oneself’ and \( zi-\text{satu-suru} \) ‘kill oneself’ have external and internal arguments and they are associated with a hidden transitive syntactic structure.

(31) a. John-ga \( zi-\text{ritu-suru} \).
    John-Nom self-support-do.
    ‘John supports himself.’

\[
\text{DP} \quad \overset{\text{vP}}{\rightarrow} \quad \overset{\text{VP}}{\rightarrow} \quad \overset{\text{v}}{\rightarrow} \quad \overset{\text{VNP}}{\rightarrow} \quad \overset{\text{V [DO]}}{\rightarrow} \quad \overset{\text{zi-suru}}{\rightarrow} \quad \overset{\text{-ritu}}{\rightarrow}
\]

(32) a. The \( z\)-morpheme meaning ‘self’ is base-generated as the internal argument of the Sino-Japanese verbal noun. It is an anaphoric object bound by the external argument of the complex verb.

b. Due to the bound-morpheme nature, the \( z\)-morpheme undergoes successive obligatory incorporation through the verbal noun and the light verb \( su\text{ru} \) ‘do’ into the \( v \) head to create the surface complex predicate.

c. The value of the \( v \) head is selected from the fixed class (e.g. CAUSE, DO, BECOME, BE) (the decompositional theory of argument structure; Harley, 1995, Harley and Noyer, 2001). The light verb of transitive objectless \( z\)-verbs has the value DO.

d. The sole DP argument is the external argument of the whole complex predicate. It is base-generated in [Spec, vP] and undergoes movement to [Spec, TP] to receive Nominative case.

- The results of the diagnostics in section 4 indicate that these \( z\)-verbs have external arguments.

- Two diagnostics for internal argumenthood show that these \( z\)-verbs have internal arguments.

  (i) Numerical Quantifier Floating (\( \rightarrow (33) \)) and (ii) The \( takusan \) construction (\( \rightarrow (37) \))

- 1st diagnostic for internal argumenthood: Numerical Quantifier Floating

  - The floating numeral quantifier is in a mutual c-command relation with the \( z\)-morpheme ‘self’ VP-internally.

(33) a. \textit{Gakusei-ga san-\text{nin} \quad [VP zyoozuni zi-\text{ritu-si-ta}].}
    student-Nom three-CL skillfully self-support-do-Past
    ‘Three students supported themselves skillfully.’
b. Gakusei-ga [VP zyoozuni san-nin zi-ritu-si-ta].
   student-Nom skillfully three-CL self-support-do-Past
   ‘Three students supported themselves skillfully.’

- 2nd diagnostics for internal argumenthood: the Takusan construction (Kageyama, 1993, 1996)
  
  - Takusan is a numeral quantifier / an adverb that means ‘a lot, many, much.’
  - Takusan functions as a numeral quantifier if verbs have an (underlying) internal argument that
    the phrase modifies. Takusan functions as an adverb that indicates the amount of action which
    is denoted, if verbs lack an internal argument.

(34) a. (Hito-ga) takusan (hon-o) yon-da [Transitive V]
   (people-Nom) a lot (book-Acc) read-Past
   ‘(Someone) read a lot (of books) /*A lot (of people) read (books)’
   b. [TP (Hito$_i$-ga) [VP $t_1$ [VP takusan (hon-o) yon ] da ]]

(35) a. (Hito-ga) takusan hasit-ta [Unergative V]
   (people-Nom) a lot run-Past
   ‘(Someone) ran a lot (= great distance) /*A lot (of people) ran’
   b. [TP (Hito$_i$-ga) [VP $t_1$ [VP takusan hasit ] ta ]]

(36) a. (Happa-ga) takusan oti-ta [Unaccusative V]
   (leaves-Nom) a lot fall-Past
   ‘A lot (of leaves) fell /*(A leaf) fell frequently’
   b. [TP (Happa$_i$-ga) [VP $t_1$ [VP takusan t$_i$ oti ] ta ]]

(37) a. (Hito-ga) takusan zi-ritu-si-ta [Zi-V]
   (people-Nom) a lot self-support-do-Past
   ‘A lot (of people) supported themselves /*(Someone) supported himself frequently’
   b. [TP (Hito$_i$-ga) [VP $t_1$ [VP takusan zi$_i$-ritu-si ] ta ]]

5.2 Objectless Zi-verbs with an Unaccusative structure

- Objectless zi-verbs such as zi-kai-suru ‘collapse by itself’ and zi-baku-suru ‘explode by itself’ are
  unaccusative verbs.

(38) a. Tatemono-ga zi-kai-si-ta.
   building-Nom self-collapse-do-Past
   ‘The building collapsed (by itself).’

b. vP
   DP
   Tatemono
   VP
   VNP
   Adv
   zi-
   t
   -kai

   [V suru
   [BECOME]]
a. The sole DP is base-generated as an internal argument of the verbal noun and moves to [Spec, vP].

b. The v head has the value BECOME.

c. The zi-morpheme functions as an adjunct that means ’by itself.’\(^3\) (38a) can be paraphrased easily as (40).

(40) Tatemono-ga {sizento/hitorideni} taore-ta.
    building-Nom by itself collapse-Past
    ‘The building collapsed by itself.’

• The five diagnostics for external argumenthood introduced in section 4, applied to this type of objectless zi-verbs, show that these verbs lack external arguments.

(41) a. *(Hankai-zyootai dat-ta node) tatemono-ga zi-kai-si-naosi-ta.
    Half-collapse-state Cop-Past since building-Nom Zi-collapse-do-again-Past
    ‘The building got collapsed by itself again (since it has been half-destroyed).’

b. *(Tuyoi zisin-notame) tatemono-ga zi-kai (*=o) si-ta
    strong earthquake-for building-Nom Zi-collapse-Acc do-Past
    ‘The building got collapsed by itself due to a strong earthquake.’

c.?*John-ga ie-ni zi-kai-s-are-ta.
    John-Nom house-Dat Zi-collapse-do-Pass-Past
    ‘John was adversely affected by having his house get collapsed by itself.’

d.*Ie-ga John-niyotte zi-kai-s-ase-rare-ta
    house-Nom John-by Zi-collapse-do-Cause-Pass-Past
    ‘The house was made to get collapsed by itself by John.’

e. Ano hoeru-de-wa honkan-to-bekkan-ga/*-de zi-kai-si-ta.
    That hotel-Loc-Top main building-and-annex-Nom/Instr Zi-collapse-do-Past
    ‘As for that hotel, the main building and annex got collapsed by themselves.’

• The two diagnostics for internal argumenthood show that these verbs underlyingly have an internal argument.

(42) Tatemono-ga [vp kireini san-ken t\(_i\) zi-kai-si-ta].
    building-Nom finely three-CL Zi-collapse-do-Past
    ‘Three buildings finely collapsed by themselves.’

(43) a. *(Biru-ga) takusan zi-kai-si-ta.
    (building-Nom) a lot Zi-collapse-do-Past
    ‘A lot of buildings collapsed by themselves.’

b. [vp *(Biru-ga)] [vp t\(_i\) [vp takusan t\(_i\) zi-kai-si ]] ta ]

\(^3\)We gloss adjunct zi-morphemes as Zi in the examples.
5.3 Objectless Zi-verbs with an Unergative structure

- Third type of objectless zi-verb:
  Tsujimura and Aikawa (1999) mention as a future task to be undertaken for a complete classification of zi-verbs that “there is at least one other type in which zi- plays a role as an adjunct. Included in this list are zi-sui-suru ‘do one’s own cooking,’ zi-syuu-suru ‘study for oneself,’ zi-doku-suru ‘read for oneself,’ and zi-kyuu-suru ‘supply for oneself’” (p.40).

   John-Nom Zi-cooking-do
   ‘John cooks by himself.’

   b. vP
      v`
      DP v' v
      John VP [DO]
      VNP VN suru
      zi- -sui

(45) a. The light verb has the value DO, like the transitive type.
   b. The zi-morpheme functions as an adjunct, like the unaccusative type. However, this means ‘by oneself’: (44a) can be closely paraphrased as (46).

     John-Nom by himself cooking-do
     ‘John cooks by himself.’

- The five diagnostics for external argumenthood show that these verbs have an external argument.

     Once mistake-do-Past but John-Nom Zi-cooking-do-again-Past
     ‘John was again in the habit of cooking by himself (though he has once failed).’

   b. John-ga zi-sui(-o) suru.
      John-Nom Zi-cooking-Acc do
      ‘John cooks by himself.’

      John-Nom son-Dat Zi-cooking-do-Pass-Past
      ‘John was adversely affected by having his son cook himself.’

      son-Nom John-by Zi-cooking-do-Caus-Pass-Past
      ‘His son was made to cook by himself by John.’
e. Setuyaku-notame watasi-tati-ga/de zi-sui-suru.
   saving-for I-Pl-Nom/Instr Zi-cooking-do
   ‘We cook by ourselves to save money.’

- The two diagnostics for internal argumenthood show that these verbs lack internal arguments.

(48) *Gakusei-ga [VP zyoozuni san-nin zi-sui-suru]
   student-Nom skillfully three-CI Zi-cooking-do
   ‘Three students do their own cooking skillfully.’

(49) a. (Dareka-ga) takusan zi-sui-suru.
   (someone-Nom) a lot Zi-cooking-do
   ‘Someone does their own cooking frequently.’

   b. [TP (Dareka-ga) [VP t1 [VP takusan zi-sui-suru ] ]]

5.4 Three-way classification

- The Syntax of Objectless Zi-verbs

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transitive (zi-ritu-suru ‘support oneself’ )</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Arg</td>
<td>DO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccusative (zi-kai-suru ‘destroy by itself’ )</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Adj</td>
<td>BECOME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unergative (zi-sui-suru ‘cook by oneself’ )</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Adj</td>
<td>DO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- An independent argument in favor of the three-way classification of objectless zi-verb:

  Sino-Japanese verbal nouns are classified into three ways (Dubinsky, 1985, 1989, Miyagawa, 1989a, Tsujimura, 1990)

  - transitive (e.g. hakai-suru ‘destruction-do, destruct’)
  - unaccusative (sikyo-suru ‘death-do, die’)
  - unergative (benkyoo-suru ‘study-do, study’)

⇒ Objectless zi-verbal nouns form a proper subset of Sino-Japanese verbal nouns.

6 Object-taking Zi-verb

- The second type of zi-verb: these verbs can occur with an object argument.

(50) John-ga musuko-o zi-man-si-ta. (= (2b))
   John-Nom son-Acc self-boasting-do-Past
   ‘Johni boasted about hisi son.’
1st property of object-taking zi-verb: Nominalized zi-verbs induce reflexive interpretations without any overt object argument.

(51) Zi-man-suru-no-wa yoku-nai
    self-boast-do-ing-Top good-not
    ‘Boasting about {oneself/*someone else} is not good.’

2nd property: Object arguments must be in an inalienable possession relation with subjects.

(52) John-ga { 0 / zibun-no/*Mary-no } musuko-o zi-man-si-ta.
    John-Nom { / self-Gen / Mary-Gen } son-Acc self-boast-do-Past
    ‘John, boasted about { (his) / hisi/*Mary’s} son.’

The five diagnostics for external argumenthood show that these verbs have an external argument.

    Mary-Nom crime-Acc self-confessing-do-again-Past
    ‘Mary confessed about her own crime again.’

    Mary-Nom self-confessing-Acc-do-Past-thing-Top crime-Acc Cop
    ‘It was her crime that Mary confessed.’

c. Mary-ga musuko-ni hankoo-o zi-kyoo-s-are-ta.
    Mary-Nom son-Dat crime-Acc self-confessing-do-Pass-Past
    ‘Mary was adversely affected by having her son confess about his own crime.’

d. Musuko-ga Mary-niyotte hankoo-o zi-kyoo-s-ase-rare-ta.
    son-Nom Mary-by crime-Acc self-confessing-do-Caus-Pass-Past
    ‘Her son was made to confess about his own crime by Mary.’

e. Higaisya-no kazoku-no tame watasi-tati-ga/de hankoo-o zi-kyoo-si-ta.
    victim-Gen family-Gen for I-Pl-Nom/Inst crime-Acc self-confessing-do-Past
    ‘We confessed about our crime for the family of the victims.’

The syntax of Object-taking Zi-verb under the decompositional approach

(54) (Structure for (50))

\[\begin{array}{c}
\text{vP} \\
| \\
\text{DP } \quad \text{v'} \\
| \\
\text{Johni } \quad \text{VP } \quad \text{v} \\
| \\
\text{VNP } \quad \text{V } \quad [\text{DO}] \\
| \\
\text{DP } \quad \text{VN } \quad \text{suru} \\
| \\
\text{e_i } \quad \text{D } \quad \text{zi-man} \\
\end{array}\]

\[\text{musuko}\]

\[\text{4To avoid the Double-O constraint, we use cleft construction. I thank Jun for pointing out this.}\]
(55) a. The subject John is base-generated in [Spec,vP] with the value DO and moves into [Spec,TP] for Nominative case.
   b. There is an empty category (e₁) that is bound by the zi-morpheme within the verbal complex. This morpheme, in turn, is bound by the subject in [Spec,vP].

→ Any position where the zi-morpheme is base-generated?
→ What is this zi-morpheme?

7 Summary

• We have provided several syntactic and morphological arguments for the three way contrast among objectless zi-verbs: transitive, unaccusative, and unergative, contrary to Tsujimura and Aikawa’s (1999) Uniform Unaccusative analysis.

• Only zi-verbs with a transitive structure are reflexive verbs.
  (Transitive objectless zi-verbs. Object-taking zi-verbs also?)

• The zi-morpheme is ambiguous:
  – argument zi-morpheme ‘self’ (transitive objectless zi-verbs)
  – adjunct zi-morpheme ‘by itself’ (unaccusative objectless zi-verbs)
  – adjunct zi-morpheme ‘by oneself’ (unergative objectless zi-verbs)
  – ?? (Object-taking zi-verbs)
References


