

# A Systemic Functional Analysis of Pain Expressions in Japanese

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# A Systemic Functional Analysis of Pain Expressions in Japanese<sup>1)</sup>

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## 1. Grammaticalization of pain expressions

### 1. 1. Pain expressions in English

A question had long been lingering in my mind about how the speakers of English would express pain which is indispensable for any human beings. From time to time I came across terms like 'headache', 'stomachache', 'sore throat', etc. but these terms appeared in a dialogue or a novel sporadically without any systematic arrangement, and of course, without any grammatical analysis. Besides, many linguists have been interested in the relation between language and human brain, especially from the viewpoint of language acquisition. Their concern is more on the grammar pre-existing in the brain than on the actual situation which influences the speaker producing speech. Branches in pragmatics generally show interest in the development of discourse, not so much in differentiated expressions of human experience such as pain.

It was quite natural, therefore, that I was very pleased when I first read Halliday's paper, 'On the grammar of pain' (1998: 1-32). Halliday finds it important to examine expressions of pain because, he says, 'we need to analyse in considerable detail how we as a species make sense of our daily experience by construing it in language' (1998: 2). This is his basic standpoint in linguistics, but on top of it, pain expressions have given him more surprise and interest, as he says:

The grammar of every natural language is a theory of human experience, and it is a powerful theory in that it covers every aspect of that experience both real and imaginary; yet pain does not fit easily and naturally into the phenomenological model the grammar provides,

despite the fact that it has obviously been a part of it from the beginning. But, on the other hand, and for that very reason, I think it is important to locate the grammar of pain in the context of the lexicogrammar as a whole, to see it as an aspect of the overall construal of experience (1998: 2).

This is how he started analyzing pain expressions in English. His analysis fascinated me because his grammaticalization was just like unfolding a folded carpet revealing the gorgeous design on it. I never imagined English had so many different ways of expressing pain. I found that my knowledge of pain expression in English was only a small part of it.

### 1. 2. Pain expressions in Japanese

Soon a second question occurred to me about why and how it is possible for Japanese to express by a single term '*itai*' what all the different expressions given in Halliday do. In Japanese this adjective *itai* can describe any pain. No matter what part of your body hurts, you can say '*Koko ga itai*' (This place hurts). You don't have to learn many different expressions: '*itai*' is almighty.

Thus, I tried to translate into Japanese the 24 basic pain expressions given by Halliday (1998: 16-17) and found that my first impression was not far from reality. Table 1 gives parallel pain expressions in English and Japanese. Column A contains Halliday's English expressions and column B contains my Japanese translations.

Table 1. Comparative table of pain expressions in English and Japanese

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
1.	My knee hurts.	<i>Hiza ga itai.</i>
2.	My knee's hurting.	<i>Hiza ga itai.</i>
3.	I hurt/ache (here).	<i>(Koko ga) itai.</i>
4.	I'm hurting/aching (here).	<i>(Koko ga) itai.</i>
5.	It hurts/aches (here).	<i>(Koko ga) itai.</i>
6.	It's hurting/aching (here).	<i>(Koko ga) itai.</i>
7.	My knee's hurting me.	<i>Hiza ga itai.</i>
8.	You're hurting me.	<i>Itai yo/desu yo.</i>
9.	I've hurt my knee.	<i>Hiza o kega shita.</i>
10.	I've hurt myself (on the knee).	<i>(Hiza o) kega shita.</i>

11.	That hurts.	<i>Soko/sore ga itai.</i>
12.	My throat feels sore.	<i>Nodo ga itai/hirihiri suru.</i>
13.	My throat's feeling sore.	<i>Nodo ga itai/hirihiri suru.</i>
14.	I feel sore (here).	<i>(Koko ga) itai/hirihiri suru.</i>
15.	I'm feeling sore (here).	<i>(Koko ga) itai/hirihiri suru.</i>
16.	It's sore (here).	<i>(Koko ga) itai/hirihiri suru.</i>
17.	The wound is painful.	<i>Kizu ga itai/itamu.</i>
18.	I've got a headache/ a pain in my neck.	<i>Atama ga itai./ Kubi ga itai.</i>
19.	That gives me a headache.	<i>Sore de atama ga itai.</i>
20.	That's giving me a headache.	<i>Sore de atama ga itai.</i>
21.	Do you feel any pain?	<i>Itai no?/Itai-n desu ka?</i>
22.	My pain is bad (today).	<i>(Kyou wa) hidoku itai/itamu.</i>
23.	Are you in (great) pain?	<i>(Hidoku) itai no/itamu no/itami masu ka?</i>
24.	The pain suggest (that) . . .	<i>Kono itami wa . . . no yoo desu.</i>

It is interesting to find many significant differences between the two languages. Most of the Japanese expressions have a single sequence consisting of the focus-denoting particle *ga* + *itai*. The English expressions are deliberately grouped into three: pain expressed by a verb, 1-11; pain expressed by an adjective, 12-17; and pain expressed by a noun, 18-24. This is a point of departure for Halliday's discussion when trying to see how differently pain is described in the transitivity system of English. Based on his systemic functional linguistics (SFL, hereafter), the present paper will try to see how pain is described in Japanese.

It is clear from the table that the present tense and the present progressive tense and various other constructions in English are not differentiated in Japanese, all having the same sequence *ga itai*, literally meaning 'is painful'.<sup>2)</sup> Since *itai* by itself presupposes the speaker is the sufferer, when the sufferer is not the speaker, different predicates and constructions are employed, as in 8, 21, 23, and 24. For the English word 'sore', 12-16, two expressions are given in Japanese, *itai* and *hirihiri suru*. While the adjective *itai* is a general term to describe a painful condition, an onomatopoeic verb *hirihiri suru* might be closer to 'be sore' as it means 'do smarting'.

Thus, the sequence *ga itai* covers 18 out of 24 English expressions. This means the adjective *itai* is the key term in Japanese pain expressions. The next section first observes a real dia-

logue between a doctor and a patient and then looks into a corpus for pain expressions in general.

## 2. Data of Japanese pain expressions

### 2. 1. Doctor-Patient conversation

The following is a conversation between a doctor and a patient, recorded by myself at the doctor's consulting room on May 14, 2002. The conversation continues for about 15 minutes, but I will pick out only the parts which are relevant to the discussion in the present paper. English glosses are given beneath each Japanese term, except for some particles whose functions cannot be equalized with English. They are simply marked 'P'. See more for 'ga' in Note (2).

#### Doctor-Patient Conversation

D: . . . . *Kyoo wa doo saremashita ka?*

today P what matter Hon Q

'What is the matter with you today?'

P: *Netsu ga getsuyooobi kurai kara dete . . .*

fever P Monday since came

'I've been having a fever since Monday . . .'

D: *Un?*

'Yes?'

P: *Netsu ga, nanado-gobu kuraino . . .*

fever P 7 degrees 5 point about

'The fever is about 37.5 degrees.'

D: *Nanado-gobu kuraino netsu ga?*

7 degrees 5 point about fever P

'A fever of about 37.5 degrees?'

P: *Nichiyooobi ni demashite . . .*

Sunday on came-Hon

'It started on Sunday.'

D: *Un, futsuka mae ne.*

'I see. 2 days ago?'

P: *Hai, getsu, ka, to kyoo mo desune, rokudo-kubu, hachibu kuraino*  
 yes Monday Tuesday and today too Hon 36.9-8 degrees about  
*netsu ga zutto sagara-nai node . . . . Ato, nodo no ue no hoo ga itamun desu ga . . . .*  
 fever P for a while fall-not as and throat above around P ache Hon  
*Ato chotto kansetsu mo nanka darui yoona itami ga aru to yuu ka . . . .*  
 and a little joint too somewhat heavy like ache P exist say  
 'Yes. On Monday, and Tuesday, that is today, I've had a fever of about 36.8-9  
 degrees and it just won't go down. Also the upper part of my throat is aching. And  
 my joints are somewhat heavy and aching, too . . .'

In order to describe the ill condition of her body, the sufferer employs terms of 'body part', 'kind of pain', 'feeling of pain', 'relieving of pain', 'time and/or duration of pain', 'other symptoms', etc. Table 2 contains all such terms used in the above dialogue.

Table 2. Collocations of pain expressions used in the dialogue

parts of the body	<i>nodo</i> (throat), <i>kansetsu</i> (joints), <i>mune</i> (chest), <i>te</i> (hand), <i>mimi</i> (ear)
kinds of pain	<i>itami</i> (pain), <i>darui</i> (heavy)
feeling of pain	<i>itai</i> (hurting/aching), <i>itamu</i> (hurt/ache), <i>aru</i> (exist), <i>nai/arimasen</i> (exist-not), <i>deru</i> (come out), <i>tsuzuku</i> (continue)
relieving of pain	<i>sagara-nai</i> (fall-not), <i>kawara-nai</i> (change-not)
time/duration of pain	<i>futsuka-mae kara</i> (since 2 days ago), <i>zutto</i> (all the time)
other symptoms	<i>netsu</i> (fever), <i>seki</i> (cough), <i>tan</i> (phlegm), <i>ne-ase</i> (sweat while sleep- ing)

These collocations are almost the same as Halliday's (1998: 6), which means that both languages utilize similar categorical domains in describing pain. That is, the terms concerning pain cover very much the same symptoms and phenomena. The focus of discussion, then, should be on how they are structured to convey the feeling of pain.

Let us first see how the adjective *itai* and its derived forms, verb *itamu* and noun *itami*, are used in the dialogue. *Itamu* and *itami* are used in the last utterance of the above excerpt. They are repeated below in (1) and (2), with functional labelling of SFL, which is given in the following examples also. The meaning of each term is given in the text, when necessary in the discussion.

- (1) *Nodo no ue no hoo ga itamin desu.*  
 throat of upper part P ache Hon  
 [Actor/Medium Process: material; middle]  
 'The upper part of my throat is hurting.'
- (2) *Kansetsu mo nanka darui yoona itami ga aru to yuuka . . .*  
 joint too somewhat heavy like ache P exist say  
 [circum: location Existent Process: existential]  
 'I should say my joints, too, are somewhat heavy and aching.'

In (1), the process could be material with the body part *nodo no ue no hoo* as the Actor or Medium. The analysis of (2) is simple and clear, as the verb *aru* clearly denotes the existence of something; therefore the process is existential with the pain *itami* as the Existent existing in the location specified as the body part *kansetsu*.

The adjective *itai* appears in the dialogue a couple of minutes after this excerpt when the doctor says (3), in which he is rephrasing what the patient said a while ago. That is why the body part means 'your throat' and 'your joints'. The two clauses are relational with the body part as the Carrier for each process. This is the basic pattern of Japanese pain expressions as shown in Table 1. Note, however, in ordinary speech if the sequence *ga itai* describes a second person's pain, the clause should be made into interrogative, as (21) in Table 1. Here the doctor is simply repeating the patient's utterance and that is why (3) is in the declarative.

- (3) D: *Nodo ga itai . . . sorekara kansetsu ga itai.*  
 throat P hurting and joint P aching  
 [Carrier Pro: relational] [Carrier Pro: relational]  
 'You've had a sore throat . . . and aching joints.'

Now that some of the typical expressions of pain have been highlighted from the real dialogue, let us search a corpus for more examples.

## 2. 2. Sakyo Komatsu Corpus

Sakyo Komatsu Corpus is constructed of a collection of novels written by a popular novelist, Sakyo Komatsu. His novels are mainly science fictions and his interests are in social and political topics. Most of his novels are now available on the internet and about 1,300 of them

have been electronically coded to serve as a corpus with approximately 15 million letters and characters, as of April 2000. (It is impossible to count the number of words in Japanese. The only means to quantify the data is to count the number of letters and characters.)

I have searched for basic terms of pain expressions in this corpus and the result is given in Table 3. Since the adjective *itai* and the verb *itamu* have conjugations, the conjugated forms and their counts are given in parentheses. The three basic terms and *zutsuu* (headache) are often used metaphorically but such usages are excluded from the counts and Table 3 includes only those used to describe physical pain.

**Table 3. Pain expressions in Sakyo Komatsu Corpus**

<i>itai</i> (painful) adj.	133
( <i>itai</i> / <i>itai</i> -	59)
( <i>itaka</i> -	4)
( <i>itaku</i> -	70)
<i>itamu</i> (to ache/to hurt) v.	142
( <i>itamu</i>	65)
( <i>itami</i> -	45)
( <i>itamu</i> + N	32)
<i>itami</i> (pain/ache) n.	194
<i>itasa</i> (pain/ache) n.	28
<i>zutsuu</i> (headache) n.	89
<i>fukutsuu</i> (ache on the abdomen) n.	15
<i>yootsuu</i> (ache on the hip) n.	2
<i>itsuu</i> (stomachache) n.	2
<i>shitsu</i> (toothache) n.	1

Table 4 gives a list of onomatopoeic and figurative expressions of pain, with the counts in Sakyo Komatsu Corpus. Onomatopoeic expressions with the verb *suru* figuratively describe pain and function as independent predicates like *hirihiri suru*, as in 12-16 in Table 1. Figurative expressions, though containing verbs, do not function as independent predicates but are simple modifiers which either take *yoona* or *yooni* depending on their modified elements.



Table 4. Onomatopoeic &amp; figurative expressions of pain in Sakyo Komatsu Corpus

## Onomatopoeic expressions

<i>gangan suru</i>	(pounding)	34
<i>hirihiri suru</i>	(smarting)	20
<i>zukizuki suru</i>	(throbbing)	16
<i>piripiri suru</i>	(smarting)	6
<i>chikuchiku suru</i>	(prickling)	4
<i>zukinzukin suru</i>	(throbbing)	2
<i>kirikiri suru</i>	(stinging)	2
<i>kushakusha suru</i>	(wishing to be rubbed)	1

## Figurative expressions

<i>shimetsukerareru yoona/ni</i>	(as if being choked)	6
<i>yakeru yoona/ni</i>	(as if burning)	5
<i>tsukisasu yoona/ni</i>	(as if sticking)	2
<i>sasu yoona/ni</i>	(as if stinging)	2
<i>oshitsubusareru yoona/ni</i>	(as if being squeezed)	1

## 3. Analyses of Japanese pain expressions

## 3. 1. Pain as Quality

Pain is described as a quality by means of the adjective *itai*. A typical clause with this adjective is given in (3) above. The same sequence is found in Sakyo Komatsu Corpus, as in (4), with *atama* and *kibun* as the Carrier in the two relational process clauses. The source for each example is given in parentheses: 'SK' referring to Sakyo Komatsu Corpus, 'BS' an internet site provided by a brain surgeon, and 'GP' an internet site provided by a general practitioner.

- (4) *Atama ga itai . . .*                      *kibun ga warui . . .* (SK)  
 head P ache                      feeling P bad  
 [Carrier Pro: relational: attri] [Carrier Pro: relational: attributive]  
 'My head aches . . . I'm feeling sick . . .'

In (5), *watashi wa* has two functions, the Senser of a mental process with *itai* and the Sayer of a verbal process with *tsutaeru*. The body part *hara* functions as the Phenomenon for the mental process.

- (5) *'Ima watashi wa haru ga itai' to tsutaeru koto wa dekite mo, . . .* (SK)  
 now I P abdomen P ache that communicate P can though  
 [Sen/Say] [Pheno Pro: mental]'1 [Process: verbal ] 2  
 'Though I can say that I have an abdominal ache now, . . . .'

What will happen, then, if the Senser appears overtly with *anata wa* at the beginning of (4)? There is no change in semantics but the process becomes mental. Further discussion concerning similar phenomena in the analyses will be given soon below. Clauses like (6)-(8) consist of *itai* with onomatopoeic/figurative modifiers alone, which renders the process existential as there are no other participants. The special modifiers are underlined.

- (6) *Kiri de momu yooni* *itai*. (GP)  
 awl with drill like hurt/ache  
 [Circumstance Process: existential; existing/occurring]  
 'It aches as if an awl is drilling into it.'
- (7) *Gyuutto shimetsukerareru yooni* *itai*. (BS)  
 squeezingly like hurting/aching  
 [Circumstance Process: existential; existing/occurring]  
 'It hurts as if being squeezed strongly.'
- (8) *Gaanto nagurareta yooni* *itai*. (GP)  
 whack be hit like hurting/aching  
 [Circumstance Process: existential; existing/occurring]  
 'It hurts as if being whacked.'

Some questions might be raised. If the body part is added, (6)-(8) become relational; if the sufferer is added, the clauses become mental. Why is it that the overt appearance of the body part and/or the Senser on the surface makes the designation of process type change? Is it because the phenomenon, the state of being painful, is unstable, like the weather, as Halliday often says (1994: 108; 1998: 13-14, 19-20)? Perhaps. But the varieties in the process types are in fact caused by the difference in the way how pain is grammaticalized. Variety in English lies in the grammatical constructions while that of Japanese lies in the presence/absence of the sufferer and/or the body part.

This fact suggests that there is a problem with applying the same analytic technique to

different languages. The importance of the subject is the key point. When it is the suffering person, it has the function of the Senser and the process is mental. When it is the aching body part, it has the function of the Carrier and the process is relational. When there is no subject as in Japanese, how can the process be designated? The similar problem might exist in any theory of linguistics which originated in European languages. There are languages which allow the absence of the subject among European languages, but their basic structures are very much similar to English and there usually exist some elements which identify the subject. The absence of the subject in Japanese is totally different from that in languages like Italian, Spanish, etc. : the context is the sole key and utterances are constructed from the speaker's viewpoint.

Among many theories of language, Halliday's SFL seems to be the one that tries to incorporate the context and the user into the grammatical system. Even though there are some discrepancies when applied to Japanese, SFL seems to allow more freedom than other theories. However, in the discussion of transitivity like process types, SFL also reveals limitation caused by the structure of English. Halliday often says that each language must construct its own grammar, but it is a hard task to be idiosyncratic and universalistic at the same time. For the moment, I have no other choice than follow Halliday to analyze Japanese expressions of pain. Table 5 sums up the discussion of the above examples to show how the presence/absence of some elements contributes to the transitivity system of each clause.

Table 5. Pain as quality in relation to other elements and particles

	Patient	Particle	Body part	Particle	Process
(3)	$\phi$	$\phi$	Carrier	<i>ga</i>	Relational
(4)	$\phi$	$\phi$	Carrier	<i>ga</i>	Relational
(5)	Senser	<i>wa</i>	Phenomenon	<i>ga</i>	Mental
(6)	$\phi$	$\phi$	$\phi$	$\phi$	Existential
(7)	$\phi$	$\phi$	$\phi$	$\phi$	Existential
(8)	$\phi$	$\phi$	$\phi$	$\phi$	Existential

### 3. 2. Pain as Thing

*Itami*, the noun form of *itai*, covers all kinds of pain, no matter what part of the body pain occurs. This noun can function as the Actor taking the particle *ga* followed by various kinds of verbs. Some examples are given in (9)-(13). Verbs can be existing (9), running (10), leaving (11), coming back (12), getting worse (13), etc. The process depends on each verb.

- (9) *Nanika karada no nakani itami ga aru yoona . . .* (SK)

somehow body inside pain P exist seem

[ circum: location Existent Process: existential]

'I feel like there's a pain somewhere in my body . . .'

- (10) *Hidari mimitabu ni yakeru yoona itami ga hashitta.* (SK)

left ear burning like pain P ran

[circumstance: loc Actor Process: material]

'I felt a burning pain running in my left ear.'

- (11) *Itsukawa itami ga saru to demo omotte-iru no ka?* (SK)

someday pain P leave thinking-be Q

[circum:ext Actor Pro: mat]  $\beta$  [Process: mental]  $\alpha$

'Do you think your pain will leave someday?'

- (12) *Zenshin ni hageshii itami ga yomigaette-kita.* (SK)

whole body severe pain P came back

[circum: loc Actor Process: material]

'A severe pain came back to my whole body.'

- (13) *Ashi no itami ga hidoku-naru mitai . . .* (SK)

leg pain P worse get seem

[ Carrier Process: relational]

'The pain in my leg seems to be getting worse.'

*Itami* also becomes the Phenomenon of the sufferer's sensation, taking the particle *o*, followed by various verbs, such as feeling (14), forgetting (15), etc. The sequence of '*itami o + verb*' does not describe the pain but tells about the physical or mental condition of the sufferer. In (15), *watashi wa* functions as the Senser of a mental process of *wasurete* and as the Actor of a material process of *kake-agatta*.

- (14) *Yubi no hone ni surudoit itami o kanjita.* (SK)

finger bone P severe pain P felt

[circumstance: loc Phenomenon Process: mental]

'(I) felt a severe pain in the bone of my finger.'

- (15) *Watashi wa itami o wasurete kaidan o kake-agatta.* (SK)

I pain P forgetting stairs P ran up

[Sen/Act] [Phenom Pro: mental]1 [circum: loc Pro: material]=2

'I ran up the stairs, forgetting my pain.'

*Itami* sometimes takes the particle *ni* or *de* whose meaning is close to 'because of' or 'owing to' when used in clauses describing the sufferer's act caused by the pain, as in (16) and (17). The process is material and the Actor can be any person, not necessarily the first person. Thus, the sequence *itami ni/de* detaches the pain from the speaker and allows him/her to describe other person's pain, as well as his/her own. Unless the context determines the sufferer, the one having pain must be identified, as *kanojo wa* in (17).

(16) *Me no kuramu yoona itami ni uzukumatta.* (SK)

dazzling like pain P crouched  
[ circumstantial: cause Process: material]

'(I) crouched down because of the dazzling pain.'

(17) *Ue to kizu no itami de kanojo wa umaku aruke nakatta.* (SK)

hunger & wound pain P she well walk could not  
[circumstantial: cause Actor Process: material]

'Owing to hunger and pain in the wound, she could not walk well.'

There is another noun *itasa* whose meaning is the same as *itami* but it has some connotation of 'a painful feeling' rather than pain itself. When followed by *ni* or *de*, as in (18), it becomes circumstantial and provides the cause of the sufferer's act. This sequence *itasa ni/de* can describe other persons' act as well as the speaker's own.

(18) *Yakedo no itasa ni himei o ageta.* (SK)

burn painfulness P cry P gave  
[circumstantial: cause Verbiage Process: Verbal]

'(I) gave a cry because of the pain.'

Beside these two nouns, there are compound nouns which specifically denote pain in particular body parts. Those most frequently used are given in the corpus (Table 3), though their occurrences are not many as compared to *itami*. These compound nouns are often preceded by onomatopoeic expressions plus a verb *suru* as in (19) and figurative expressions as in (21).

When such expressions of pain take *ga*, the pain can involve actions like ‘start’ (19) or ‘attack’ (21). When pain takes the particle *o*, it functions as the Phenomenon in a mental process clause (20) and as the Verbiage of the sufferer’s verbal act (22). Although (23) is in the material process with the verb *suru*, it is perfectly possible to recompose it, without any change in meaning, into the existential process of *ga aru*, as in (9). *Suru* here has no such meaning as ‘doing something particular’.

- (19) *Gangan suru zutsuu ga hajimatta.* (GP)  
 splitting do headache P started  
 [ Actor Process: material]  
 ‘A splitting headache has begun.’
- (20) *Kare wa karui zutsuu o kanji nagara itta.* (SK)  
 he P light headache P feeling said  
 [Senser/Sayer] [ Phenomenon Pro: mental]1 [Pro: verbal]=2  
 ‘He said, while feeling a light headache.’
- (21) *Atama no shin ni momikomu-yooni hageshii zutsuu ga osoikakatte kite . . .* (SK)  
 head center drilling-like severe headache P attack come  
 [circum: location Actor Process: material]  
 ‘A severe headache attacked me as if drilling into the center of my head . . .’
- (22) *Namiko ga kyuuuni massao-ni natte fukutsuu o uttae hajimeta.* (SK)  
 Namiko P suddenly pale turned abdominal P ache appeal began  
 [Carri/Sayer] [ Pro: rel]1 [Verbiage Pro: verbal]=2  
 ‘Namiko suddenly turned pale and began to tell (us) of her abdominal ache.’
- (23) *Itsuu to hakike mo suru soo desu.* (SK)  
 stomachache and nausea also do/exist so Cop  
 [Medium Medium Process: mat; middle]  
 ‘(She) says (she) feels stomachache and nausea, too.’

Thus, *itami*, *itasa*, and several compound nouns are mapped into different processes depending on the particles following them. When followed by *ga*, the pain becomes the central participant of a clause and functions as the Existent, the Actor, the Carrier or the Sayer. When it is followed by *o*, there are two possibilities: one is the Goal in a material process and the other is the Phenomenon in a mental process, especially when the Senser overtly appears on the sur-

face. When the pain is followed by *ni/de* in a prepositional phrase, the pain becomes circumstantial and comes to express the cause of the sufferer's act. Note pain as Thing does not select the sufferer, while *itai* definitely does. This flexibility allows it to be used extensively in the corpus (Table 3). Table 6 sums up grammatical relations of pain, particles, and verbs in (9)-(23).

Table 6. Pain as Thing in relation to particles and verbs

	Pain	Particle	Verb	Process
(9)	Existent	<i>ga</i>	<i>aru</i> (exist)	Existential
(10)	Actor	<i>ga</i>	<i>hashiru</i> (run)	Material
(11)	Actor	<i>ga</i>	<i>saru</i> (leave)	Material
(12)	Actor	<i>ga</i>	<i>yomigaeru</i> (come back)	Material
(13)	Carrier	<i>ga</i>	<i>hidoku-naru</i> (get worse)	Relational
(14)	Phenomenon	<i>o</i>	<i>kanjiru</i> (feel)	Mental
(15)	Phenomenon	<i>o</i>	<i>wasureru</i> (forget)	Mental
(16)	Circumstantial	<i>ni</i>	<i>uzukumaru</i> (crouch)	Material
(17)	Circumstantial	<i>de</i>	<i>aruku</i> (walk)	Material
(18)	Circumstantial	<i>ni</i>	<i>himei-o-ageru</i> (give a cry)	Verbal
(19)	Actor	<i>ga</i>	<i>hajimaru</i> (begin)	Material
(20)	Phenomenon	<i>o</i>	<i>kanjiru</i> (feel)	Mental
(21)	Actor	<i>ga</i>	<i>osoikakaru</i> (attack)	Material
(22)	Verbiage	<i>o</i>	<i>uttaeru</i> (appeal)	Verbal
(23)	Medium	<i>mo</i>	<i>suru</i> (do/exist)	Material

There are other nouns which have some relations with pain, but they are mostly the names of symptoms, like 'burns', 'cuts', 'vomit' in English, and are not included here.

### 3. 3. Pain as Process

The adjective *itai* was presented as quality in 3. 1., but in fact it is a kind of process since it has conjugations and constitutes an independent clause by itself. In this section, authentic verbs of pain will be taken up. The basic verb of pain is *itamu*, which conjugates exactly like other verbs. For example, (24) has *itamu* in the base form and (25) has *itami* in the continuous form. Although this *itami* is homophonous as the noun *itami*, it is the conjugated form of the verb. There are other verbs describing specific conditions of pain, as in (26) and (27).

- (24) *I ga kirikiri itamu te ittemasita ga . . .* (SK)  
 stomach P stingingly ache said though, . . .  
 [Medium Pro: mat: middle]1 [Pro: verbal]2  
 'Though he said his stomach was stingingly aching, . . .'
- (25) *Atama ga zukizuki itami, hidoi ase datta.* (SK)  
 head P throbbing hurt lots of perspiration  
 [Medium Pro: mat: mid]1 [ Existent Pro: existential]=2  
 'My head was throbbing and lots of perspiration came out.'
- (26) *Kizu ga uzuku.* (GP)  
 wound P ache severely  
 [Medium Process: material: middle]  
 'The wound aches very severely.'
- (27) *Kizu ni mizu ga shimiru.* (GP)  
 wound P water P sting  
 [circumstance: location Actor Process: material]  
 'Water comes into the wound and stings.'
- There are other expressions frequently used in speech. They are combinations of onomatopoeic expressions, and the verb *suru*, as in (28)-(30).
- (28) *Kotoobu ga mada zukizuki site-ite . . .* (SK)  
 back head P still throbbing doing  
 [Medium Process: material: middle]  
 'The back part of my head is still throbbing, . . .'
- (29) *Nodo ga hirihiri suru hodo kawaite kita.* (SK)  
 throat P smarting do so much came to dry  
 [Medium Pro: mat: mid ]  $\beta$  [Process: relational]  $\alpha$   
 'My throat became so dry that it came to be smarting.'
- (30) *Yu wa atsukute, hifu wa piri-piri sita ga . . .* (SK)  
 hot water P hot skin P smarting did though  
 [Carrier Pro: relational]1 [Medium Process: mat: mid]=2  
 'Though the water was very hot and the skin felt smarting, . . . ' (SK)



Table 7 is a summary of pain expressions as Process realized in the above examples. Since it has acquired general characteristics of a verb, various expressions are possible, enabling the speaker to diversify his/her description of pain.

**Table 7. Pain as Process realized in relation to body parts & particles**

	<b>Body part</b>	<b>Particle</b>	<b>Verb</b>	<b>Process</b>
(24)	Medium	<i>ga</i>	<i>itamu</i>	Material
(25)	Medium	<i>ga</i>	<i>itamu</i>	Material
(26)	Medium	<i>ga</i>	<i>uzuku</i>	Material
(27)	Circumstantial: location	<i>ni</i>	<i>shimiru</i>	Material
(28)	Medium	<i>ga</i>	<i>zukizuki-suru</i>	Material
(29)	Medium	<i>ga</i>	<i>hirihiri-suru</i>	Material
(30)	Medium	<i>wa</i>	<i>piripiri-suru</i>	Material

### 3. 4. Summary of usage: Grammatical environments of core terms of pain

Let us return for a moment to Sakyo Komatsu Corpus to find grammatical environments of the core terms, '*itai*', '*itami*', and '*itamu*'. A typical environment of the adjective *itai* is 'Body part + *ga* + *itai*.' There are 133 counts of *itai*, of which 83 (62.4%) take this pattern. The number of clauses with *itai* alone amounts to 33 (24.8%). Thus, 116 (87.2%) of all the occurrences of *itai* are predicative, functioning as the Process.

The count of the verb *itamu* is 142, of which 48 (33.8%) follow a similar pattern to *itai*, but it always has a body part with *ga*. It sometimes is used in a simple interrogative, like '*itamu ka?*' (does it hurt/ache?), of which there are 16 (11.3%) examples. In total, 64 (45.1%) occurrences are predicative. There are 32 (22.5%) instances of noun-preceding *itamu*, which are verbs in a relative clause modifying the following noun; therefore, they are also predicative.

The total count of the noun *itami* is 194 and that of *itasa* is 28, amounting to 222 altogether. These nouns and other compound nouns have no restriction in their usage. They are common nouns behaving exactly like other nouns. They can function as Actor, Goal, Carrier, Phenomenon, or circumstantial element, Verbiage, or Medium, as Table 6 shows. In this sense, nominalized terms of pain are free from the possessor of the pain and can engage in any activity regardless of the speaker or the sufferer. The nominalized pain is in fact detached from the sufferer.

When *itami* takes *ga aru* as the predicate, however, the sequence undergoes the same grammatical constraint as *ga itai*. Compound nouns like *zutsuu*, too, must undergo the same

grammatical constraints when they take *ga suru* as the predicate, as in *zutsuu ga suru*. Compared to them, the adjective *itai* is most deeply connected with the sufferer, as only the sufferer can be the speaker in the discourse of *itai*. The verb *itamu* is also deeply connected with the sufferer, but it cannot stand by itself without the aching body part.

From the SFL viewpoint, pain expressions in Japanese can be arranged in a paradigm similar to Halliday's (1998: 28), that is, pain as Quality (adjective), as Process (verb), and as Thing (noun). In this sense, the pain expressions in the two languages share similar domains in semantics and grammar.

But there is something very different in Japanese from the English way of looking at pain. Compared to Halliday's frequent manifestation about ambiguity in analyzing English pain expressions, Japanese is not so ambiguous in grammatical analyses. As has been discussed earlier, the analyses can go quite regularly so long as the clauses are observed from the Japanese viewpoint. The problem arises when the functional denotations are to be assigned to each element of a clause. This is rather a fundamental problem when SFL is to be applied to Japanese, not necessarily pain expressions. The real problem here is the basic term *itai*. In the final section, I will concentrate myself on this term and observe it from a different point of view.

## 4. Conclusion

### 4. 1. Grammatical behaviour of *itai*

It is possible to construct a clause with a single adjective *itai*, as in a cry. When it is necessary to pinpoint the aching part, it appears with the particle *ga*. This sequence localizes the pain onto a body part. It is self-contained and a reference to the sufferer is not required. When the speaker feels it necessary to avoid a confusion, s/he will bring out him/herself overtly as the possessor of pain using the contrastive particle *wa*. That enables the speaker to separate the self from other possible candidates. Thus, the pattern '*watashi wa . . . ga itai*' is an objective utterance, deliberately stated to describe the speaker's own physical condition.

When the sufferer is other than the speaker, the sequence *ga itai* must be turned into an interrogative for the 2nd person, and a report, a supposition, or the like for the 3rd person, so as to make it clear who the pain belongs to. Collocations such as '*rashi?*' (it seems that), '*yooda*' (it is likely that), '*sooda*' (I hear that), '*to itteiru*' (s/he says that) and the like are frequently added to the finite *itai* to show the sufferer is the 3rd person. In conventional Japanese grammar, they are treated as auxiliaries, but in SFL they should be regarded as composing a major clause with an impersonal mental or verbal process.

There is another morpheme *garu* which follows *ita-*, the base of *itai*, and makes the whole sentence detached from the speaker. It enables the speaker to describe another person's painful condition from outside. The meaning of a combined sequence *ita-garu* is 'I can see that s/he has a pain' or 's/he shows that s/he has a pain'. This suffix *garu* is an effective way to relieve the speaker from being responsible of the content of the utterance and give him/her freedom to describe another person's sensation/feeling objectively. *Garu* can also follow *ta-*, the base of *tai*, 'want to', when describing other people's desire to do something, as *iki-ta-garu*, 's/he wants to go'.

#### 4. 2. Conceptual domains of *itai*

It seems that pain expressions in Japanese have some underlying concept that the basic sensation of pain is somewhere in the body of the speaker. Pain is there, simply existing. Such a primitive sensation is expressed by a single adjective *itai* in isolation. When it is uttered, the speaker is the sufferer. Here the speaker and the pain are inseparably linked.

Croft (2001:360) claims that in some languages linguistic distance correlates with conceptual distance. Linguistic distance is measured by the complexity in grammatical constructions while conceptual distance is measured by the actual relations of the two items, that is, how an item is 'obligatorily possessed' by the possessor. For example, in Kpelle (Niger-Kordofanian), 'my' and 'back' in 'my back' constitute one word while 'my' and 'house' in 'my house' are two separate words, and in Mekeo (Austronesian), 'my' and 'brother' in 'my brother' form one word while 'my' and 'canoe' in 'my canoe' are two separate words. The difference in structure is ascribed to the difference in the manner of possession. Croft states that such languages distinguish two types of possession, 'inalienable possession' and 'alienable possession'.

Pain in Japanese seems somehow to have this distinction of possession, which is reflected in the grammatical construction. In its most primitive stage, pain belongs to the speaker 'inalienably'. When its location in the body is consciously felt, pain becomes a little separated, 'alienated', from the speaker. When it is required that the speaker appear as the possessor of pain, the primitive sense of 'inalienability' is partly lost. Finally when the sufferer is someone else, that is, the speaker is no longer the possessor, the 'inalienable' tie between pain and the speaker is completely lost.

Such transitions in the conceptual distance are clearly reflected in the grammar. When pain is an 'inalienable' sensation of the speaker, the structure is the shortest, and a single adjective *itai* alone can function as the Process. When the possessor of pain is someone other than

the speaker, the clause *itai* cannot stand by itself but must take several morphemes to describe the pain from the other person's viewpoint. Thus, when inalienability is the highest, the structure consists of the Process alone. As inalienability lessens, the structure becomes more complex, until it is completely lost in the structure which is fully furnished with the Senser and the Phenomenon in a complex clause.

Similar close relations between the speaker's sensation/feeling and the grammatical structure are observed with regard to other predicates of Japanese. If a verb is uttered by itself, like *Itta*, 'went', the actor is unanimously understood as the speaker; therefore this single verb means 'I went'. Even if an adjunct like *kinoo*, 'yesterday', is added, it does not affect the interpretation. Other adjectives of sensation/feeling like *wreshii*, 'happy', *kanashii*, 'sad', *atsui*, 'warm', *samui*, 'cold', etc. behave exactly like *itai*.

What is characteristic of these adjectives of sensation/feeling is that they do not completely coincide with other adjectives in usage. See the examples in (31) and (32). *Itai* shares grammatical features with other adjectives like *aoi*, 'blue', but only to some extent.

- (31) a. *Sora ga aokatta.*  
 sky P blue PAST  
 'The sky was blue.'
- b. *Aoi sora o miageta.*  
 blue sky P look up PAST  
 '(I) looked up the blue sky.'
- (32) a. *Koshi ga itakatta.*  
 hip P hurt PAST  
 '(My) hip was hurting/aching.'
- ?b. *Itai koshi o nadeta.*  
 painful hip P stroke PAST  
 '(I) stroked (my) painful hip.'

It is grammatical for a common adjective to precede a noun, like *aoi sora*, 'blue sky', as in (31b), but it is very questionable if an adjective of sensation can precede a noun, as *itai koshi* in (32b). In fact, there is no such a sequence as a noun following *itai* in Sakyo Komatsu Corpus, except when *itai* is used figuratively, as in (33). Here *itai* means 'difficult', 'hard', 'tough', and the like.

(33) *Tsuma ga tootoo atama no itai hatashi o hajimete shimatta.* (SK)

wife P at last head painful tale P started

'My wife finally brought out the difficult problem.'

Besides, it is hard for a possessive case of a personal pronoun to precede a sequence like *itai koshi*, though it is perfectly acceptable without the adjective, as *watashi no koshi*, 'my hip'. There is no single instance in Sakyo Komatsu Corpus like *watashi no itai koshi*, 'my painful hip', or *kare no itai koshi*, 'his painful hip'. The same constraint applies to a compound noun like *yootsumu*, 'hip-pain', and other adjectives of feeling. Sequences like *watashi no ureshisa*, 'my happiness', or *kare no kanashimi*, 'his sadness', sound like phrases in literature or translation, very seldom heard in ordinary conversation. There is no such constraint for other common adjectives which are 'alienable' from the speaker. They can freely precede a noun and be preceded by a possessive case, as in *watashi no ookii kaban* (my big bag), *anata no akai fuku* (your red dress), etc. Without a possessive case, there is no knowing whose bag or whose dress is being referred to. The fundamental concept seems to be that a sensation/feeling can only be felt by its holder and that other people are not in a position to feel it directly.

This is exactly what Watanabe (1991) calls the distinction of *wagakoto* and *hitogoto*, 'my business and somebody else's business'. Concerning auxiliaries, Watanabe claims that there are two complementary domains in Japanese, one related to the speaker and the other related to other people. He does not discuss adjectives but his *wagakoto-hitogoto* distinction can be applied to adjectives of sensation/feeling. So long as the entity is regarded as belonging to the speaker, the language prefers to treat it as inalienable and avoid overt verbalization.

The Japanese language seems to presuppose that all the utterances are to be described from the speaker's point of view. The speaker is expected to make it clear linguistically whether what is going to be uttered belongs to himself/herself or to other persons. That is, the conceptual distance is reflected in the grammatical structure. This is a good example of 'how certain aspects of human experience are construed in the commonsense grammar of daily life' (Halliday 1998: 2).

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#### Notes

- 1) This paper was first presented at the International Systemic Functional Congress held in Liverpool in 2002 (ISFC29) and revised for this volume. I am thankful for the comments and suggestions given by the anonymous referees for this version.
- 2) The sequence *ga itai* is the key point in this paper and I would rather not call this '*ga*' the 'nominative case' but would prefer to say it shows 'a focus' of the utterance. Kiyose (1995: 21) also uses the term 'focus' for *ga* in a Wh interrogative and its reply and proposes to call it 'a sort of adverbial particle'. His proposal might be applied to the *ga* in *ga itai* as the noun preceding it denotes the place of the pain, which is in a sense adverbial. In this paper, therefore, I should like to keep it open and simply call it a particle, written as P. More detailed discussions are given regarding the differences between *ga* and *wa* in Hori (1997), using *itai* sequences in actual conversations.

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