

A Predication Approach to Copy Raising from the Perspective of Evidentiality*

Yukihiro Kanda and Masatoshi Honda

1. Introduction

Since Postal (1974), the term (Subject-to-Subject) raising has been used to refer to sentences like (1b).

- (1) a. It seems that Richard is in trouble.
 b. Richard seems to be in trouble.

The expletive sentence in (1a) has the same logical proposition as the raising one in (1b) (i.e., *Richard is in trouble*). The reason for this can be accounted for if we assume that raising is a syntactic operation which moves an embedded subject in a θ -position to the subject position of a predicate such as SEEM and APPEAR, which is a θ' -position. In other words, the DP in the subject position in (1b) is superficially an argument of the matrix predicate but actually it is a selected argument of the embedded predicate. As exemplified, the raising operation is in general applied to the (embedded) subject of an infinitival clause; however, there are sentences which apparently involve raising out of a finite clause. Consider the following examples in comparison with (1):

- (2) a. It seems like he is in trouble.
 b. Richard_i seems like he_i is in trouble.

(Potsdam and Runner (2001:453))

Notice that the proposition denoted by (2b) is analogous to that of the expletive counterpart in (2a). In previous studies, there have been attempts to capture this analogy, and sentences of the type (2b) were first examined as derived by a transformation called “Richard” (Rogers (1974a, b)). In theoretical transition, this later became known as a construction called “Copy Raising (CR)” (Potsdam and Runner (2001)) due to its appearance of involving raising with its “copy” overtly pronounced. In English, CR is presumably restricted to seven predicates; the raising predicates SEEM and APPEAR and the perception verbs LOOK, SOUND, FEEL, SMELL, and TASTE. Moreover, if these verbs take a clausal complement cooccurring with a full DP subject, it must be introduced by one of the three comparative complementizers LIKE, AS IF, or

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AS THOUGH.^{1,2} Accordingly, CR may be characterized as a construction in which a CR verb (CRV) occurs with a full DP in its subject position and takes a clausal LIKE complement which contains a pronoun coreferential with it.

As mentioned earlier, Rogers (1974a, b) was committed to relating the CR example in (2b) to the raising one in (1b), based on the requirement that the former have a pronoun coindexed with the matrix subject in the embedded clause. However, if the derivation of (2b) involved raising out of the finite clause, it would pose the following two challenges for CR in the current generative framework; (i) what grammatical mechanism establishes the dependency relation between the CR subject in the matrix clause and its coreferential pronoun in the embedded clause without recourse to illegal syntactic configurations such as A-movement from a Case position, A-movement out of a tensed clause, and A-to-A'-to-A (or “improper”) movement; and (ii) why such a dependency is required in CR. In the literature, much attention has been paid to the first issue with particular reference to movement and base-generation (see Section 2 for details), but the second issue still remains to be resolved. With this background in mind, we will argue in this paper that the coreferential dependency between the matrix subject and its binding pronoun is established for grammatical encoding of a certain meaning related to evidentiality, which is a linguistic category whose primary meaning is the source of information (e.g. Aikhenvald (2004)). More precisely, we will claim that the CR subject is interpreted as a perception basis from which the speaker infers a proposition (i.e. an instance of non-firsthand evidentiality). Along these lines, we will further argue that the relevant evidential meaning is part of the selectional requirement imposed on CRVs, which would consequently account for the relationship between these verbs and their clausal LIKE complements.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 sets up the theoretical issue of why the referential dependency is required in CR, reviewing the two main previous studies on the construction (Potsdam and Runner (2001), Landau (2011)). Subsequently, Section 3 proposes an alternative analysis based on evidentiality, adopting and modifying Landau’s (2011) analysis. Taking over the discussion, Section 4 provides supportive evidence for the proposed analysis. Finally, Section 5 draws a conclusion.

2. Previous Studies

2.1. *Potsdam and Runner (2001)*

Potsdam and Runner (2001) provide data that strengthen the assumption that the CR subject occurs in a θ^0 -position. The overview of their analysis is illustrated in (3).

¹ We refer to these clause-introducers as the “comparative complementizers,” following López-Couso and Méndez-Naya (2012).

² In this paper, we will refer to such a complement as a “clausal LIKE complement,” using LIKE as a cover term for the three complementizers.

- (3) Potsdam and Runner's (2001) Criterion
- a. Subject_i CRV {as if / as though / like} Subject_i ...
θ- / θ'-position
 - b. Subject_i CRV {as if / as though / like} ... Non-Subject_i ...
θ-position

Their central claim is that CRVs are ambiguous between a thematic and non-thematic use, depending on the position of the pronoun: it is either thematic or non-thematic when in a subject position, but it is necessarily thematic when in a non-subject position. They provide the following data to argue for this criterion:

- (4)
 - a. There seem to be problems.
 - b. The shit appears to be going to hit the fan very soon.

- (5)
 - a. % There seem like there are problems.
 - b. * There seems like John expects there to be an election.
 - c. % The shit appears as though it's going to hit the fan very soon.
 - d. * The other foot appears like the shoe is on it.

(Potsdam and Runner (2001:455-456))

Let us contrastively examine the examples in (5). In (5a) and (5b), expletive *THERE* occupies the subject position, and its "copy" occurs in a subject position in the former and in a non-subject position in the latter. Although judgements vary among individuals, (5a) is acceptable to some speakers, while (5b) is certainly not. This indicates that the matrix subject position is necessarily a θ-position when the CR pronoun occurs in an embedded non-subject position on the one hand, and that it can be a θ'-position when it occurs in the embedded subject position on the other. The same conclusion can be drawn from the contrast between (5c) and (5d): the former can be interpreted as having the meaning of the idiomatic expression *the shit hits the fan*, but the latter does not have such a characteristic and cannot be interpreted to bear the same propositional content as *it appears like the shoe is on the other foot*.

Moreover, the data that follow provide further supportive evidence for their claim. Compare the examples in the possibility of paraphrasing as a sentence that starts with expletive *IT*.

- (6)
 - a. He seems like he's ill.
 - b. = It seems like he is ill.

argument in a tensed clause. However, since they assume that no movement is involved in CR, it poses no problem concerning (9a) nor (9b).⁴ Therefore, the base-generation approach has the advantage that the theoretical issues in question do not arise as its natural consequence.

However, Potsdam and Runner (2001) leave one remaining issue: how is the A-chain relation successfully established in the CR structure (10a), while such an establishment fails in the non-CR structure with the complementizer THAT in (10b)?

- (10) a. John seems like he is ill.
 b. * John seems that he is ill.

(Potsdam and Runner (2001:465))

In order to explain this asymmetry, they speculate that the predicate SEEM introduces the THAT clause as a phase (CP), while it introduces the clausal LIKE complement as a PP and thus not as a phase. Under the assumption that the internal structure of a phase can no longer be manipulated in further syntactic derivation, it follows that THAT clauses are impenetrable, while LIKE clauses are penetrable by virtue of the presence of the preposition. Once the CP phase is sent off to PF and LF before the matrix subject is merged, there is no room for the matrix and embedded subjects to form a syntactic A-chain. Hence, the derivation would result in a failure of the A-chain formation and this would further lead to the illegitimate LF configuration in which the matrix subject does not have any θ -role. However, this analysis has severe theoretical difficulty: the pronouns in the examples in (10) are both dominated by a complementizer (i.e. [_{CP} [_C { \emptyset / that} [_{TP} ... pronoun...]]], where the pronoun has been assigned no index yet). It thus would not hold unless we provide an independent account to prove that the CP phase with the covert complementizer in (10a) does not close when selected by the P (i.e. *like*), whereas the one with THAT in (10b) does when directly selected by the V (i.e. *seem*). Concerning this issue, we will later mention an alternative possible explanation in terms of selection.

If we follow Potsdam and Runner's (2001) proposal, the CR subject can be non-thematic when it binds a pronoun in subject position. On the other hand, Landau (2011) approaches the construction from a different perspective, claiming that contexts determine whether the CR pronoun is required or not. The next subsection will review his analysis.

⁴ Chomsky (1981) rules out (9b) with recourse to principle (C) of the binding theory.

2.2. Landau (2011)

As argued so far, CR may be characterized as a construction that involves a dependency relation between the matrix subject and its binding pronoun in the embedded clause. According to Landau (2011), this requirement is closely associated with the contexts in which the sentences are uttered. In detail, he extends discussion by mentioning the following two approaches; the P(erception)-source approach (Rogers (1974a, b), Asudeh and Toivonen (2012); see also Rogers (1971, 1972)) and the non-P-source approach (Landau (2011)). The first one is an approach that regards the CR subject as a target of direct perception by the speaker. To illustrate this, let us consider the following examples:

- (11) a. Charley looked to me like he goosed Francine.
 b. I saw Charley.

(Rogers (1974a:77))

- (12) # Charley looked to me like he goosed Francine, but I didn't see Charley.
 (Asudeh and Toivonen (2012:335))

According to Rogers (1974a), the CR sentence in (11a) can be uttered only when (11b) holds as a presupposition of the utterance. Therefore, the speaker has to have perceived *Charley* directly in the context. Furthermore, Asudeh and Toivonen (2012) provide the example in (12), which indicates that it is impossible to defeat the semantic content of the direct perception expressed by CR. This P-source approach thus assumes that the CR subject is an object of the speaker's direct perception.

By contrast, Landau (2011) argues that the dependency relation is required only when there is no P-source interpretation available, based on his observations into Hebrew and English.⁵ More specifically, he proposes the following generalization concerning the properties of CR:

- (13) The P-source – Copy Generalization (PCG)
 Given a sentence “ $DP_i V_{\text{perc}}$ (to DP_j) like CP,”
 where V_{perc} [includes] SEEM, APPEAR, LOOK, SOUND, FEEL, SMELL, [and]
 TASTE, a copy (= pronoun coindexed with DP_i) is necessary in CP iff DP_i is
 not a P-source.

(Landau (2011:787))

⁵ Landau (2011:fn.8) argues that (12) is not an entailment but a strong (non-conventional) implicature which can be overridden. In other words, the direct perceptual meaning of LOOK can be (semantically) bleached and can consequently be substituted by the raising predicate SEEM. However, there seem to be dialectal variations among native speakers of English.

Bearing (13) in mind, let us now consider the following examples:

- (14) a. *Context:* I read about the nutritional merits of tsampa, the Tibetan flour (made of roasted barley and butter tea), and remark:
Tsampa sounds like Tibetans are healthier *(eating it).
- b. *Context:* My friend tells me about the nutritional merits of Tibetan food.
I respond:
You sound like Tibetans are healthier than us.

(Landau (2011:794))

First, the CR subject in (14a) is an entity that has been indirectly perceived by the speaker and is therefore a non-P-source, because the P-source of the uttered proposition is the article about tsampa. In this case, the sentence will be ill-formed if there is no coreferential pronoun in the embedded clause. By contrast, the CR subject in (14b) is an entity that the speaker has directly perceived and is therefore a P-source. In this case, the pronoun is optional and does not have to occur.⁶ Given this observation, we can summarize Landau's analysis as follows:

- (15) a. P-source interpretation
The CR pronoun is **optional** when the matrix subject is a target of **direct perception** by the speaker.
- b. Non-P-source interpretation
The CR pronoun is **obligatory** when the matrix subject is a target of **indirect perception** by the speaker.

Furthermore, Landau (2011) proposes that CR involves a null operator (Op) at Spec-CP as well as left dislocation, and that this serves to create an operator-variable configuration (i.e. a derived predicate whose subject is saturated when a subject element is merged in the matrix clause).⁷

⁶ Professor Robert Levine of the Ohio State University (p.c.) pointed out to us that (14b) needs an intonation break between *like* and the rest of the sentence. This implies that (14b) with no coreferential pronoun is an instance of the quotative use of LIKE. However, our two informants both rejected (14b) even when they put an intonation break in that position. Probably, these speakers do not accept this use of LIKE regardless of the context.

⁷ Landau (2011) follows Potsdam and Runner's (2001) analysis concerning the raising properties illustrated in (5a, c). However, his analysis differs from theirs in that the CR subject position is non-thematic even when its binding pronoun occupies a non-subject position.

- (16) a. [TP Subj_i [VP seem [PP as [CP Op_i if [TP ... *(pronoun_i)...]]]]]
 b. [CP John_i Op_i [TP something terrible [VP happened *(to him_i)]]]
 (Landau (2011:809))

It should be noted here that the merger of Op in (16a) is restricted to cases in which the CR subject has a non-P-source interpretation. Moreover, Landau (2011) also argues that Op-merger must be constrained in terms of selection, otherwise the null operator would freely be merged with non-CR structures, the configuration of which would result in ungrammatical sentences like (10b) above. Now, consider the following structure that exemplifies such cases:

- (17) * [TP Subj_i [VP seem [CP Op_i [C' that [TP he is ill]]]]]

Suppose that the matrix subject of (17) does not carry a P-source interpretation, and then it logically follows that nothing in principle prevents the null operator from merging at Spec-CP. In order to exclude such cases, it is necessary to constrain the distribution of Op-merger by assuming that the predicate SEEM has (at least) two lexical entries; one that takes a proposition as a CP complement (e.g., *It seems [that John is ill]*) and the other that selects a derived predicate with Op as a complement (e.g., *John_i seems [as Op_i if he_i is ill]*). The latter lexical entry represents that the predicate SEEM may select a certain kind of feature [+F] on the head of its complement⁸ (i.e. the derived predicate); as a result, the [+F] feature triggers Op-merger in the derived predicate. This selectional requirement is similar to the requirement that the interrogative predicate WONDER select a [+WH] feature on the head of its CP complement; as a consequence, a WH-word occurs at Spec-CP (e.g., *I wonder [CP whether [TP John wants a jacket]]*). If this is on the right track, the next question we should address is what kind of feature is involved in CR. The answer to this question might also answer the following two related questions; (i) why CRVs are restricted to the raising and perception verbs, and (ii) why CR needs a particular class of complementizers. Taking into consideration the question concerning the syntactic feature, the next section proposes an analysis that might give an account of it in terms of evidentiality.

⁸ One may wonder about the P intervening between the main verb and the derived predicate of CP that it selects. Landau's (2011) discussions lead us to assume that the null operator is merged at Spec-PP rather than Spec-CP. This is clearly not along the traditional assumption that operators occur in the specifier position of CP. This issue could be resolved if we assume that LIKE and \emptyset , AS and IF, and AS and THOUGH are reanalyzed into one single category, but it is unclear what mechanism exactly is involved.

3. Proposal

From a typological point of view, Aikhenvald (2004) introduces the term EVIDENTIALITY to refer to a linguistic concept that is used cross-linguistically. According to Aikhenvald (2004:3), “[e]videntiality is a linguistic category whose primary meaning is source of information ... we will see that this covers the way in which the information was acquired, without necessarily relating to the degree of speaker’s certainty concerning the statement or whether it is true or not.” To illustrate how it works, let us consider how Japanese encodes evidentiality. In this language, it is marked by means of sentence-final particles such as SOODA and RASHII, as shown below:⁹

- (18) a. Ame-ga fut-tei-ru sooda. [Hearsay]
rain-NOM fall-ASP-PRES Evid_{Hearsay}
‘I’ve heard that it’s raining.’
- b. Ame-ga fut-tei-ru rashii. [Inference]
rain-NOM fall-ASP-PRES Evid_{Inference}
‘It is likely that it’s raining.’
- (Honda, Naya, Ikarashi and Mori (2015:187))

In (18a), SOODA serves to represent that the uttered proposition has been obtained through hearsay. In a similar fashion, RASHII represents that it has been obtained through an inference.

Moreover, Aikhenvald (2004) distinguishes between firsthand and non-firsthand evidentiality. In Cherokee (an SOV polysynthetic language spoken by Native Americans in Oklahoma), for example, the past tense morpheme that appears in the sentence-final position in (19a) represents that the speaker has perceived a certain situation through a certain sense organ. This type of evidentiality is referred to as firsthand evidentiality (i.e. direct perception). On the other hand, the one in (19b) is a non-firsthand evidential expression which represents that the speaker has perceived a certain situation through miscellaneous means.

- (19) a. Wesa u-tlis-ʌʔi [Cherokee]
cat it-run-FIRSTH.PAST
‘A cat ran’ (I saw it running).

⁹ The abbreviations represent ASP = aspect, Evid = evidential, FIRSTH = firsthand, NOM = nominative, and PRES = present.

- b. u-gahnan-eʔi
 it-rain-NONFISRTH.PAST
 ‘It rained’ (I woke up, looked out and saw puddles of water).
 (Aikhenvald (2004:26-27))

In detail, (19a) logically means *a cat ran*, and at the same time implicates *I saw it running*. On the other hand, (19b) would be translated into English as *it rained* in a simple manner, but could simultaneously implicate *I woke up, looked out and saw puddles of water*. In other words, the presence of the morpheme indicates that the speaker is inferring from the visual information (the presence of the puddles of water in this case) that it rained. In this example, the basis for the speaker’s inference is not linguistically expressed (as part of the logical meaning), but the use of the past tense morpheme /eʔi/ implies that the speaker makes an inferential statement on the basis of certain evidence available to her/him. Based on this distinction between firsthand and non-firsthand evidentiality, it can be said that Landau’s (2011) generalization correlates with the latter when it comes to CR. Therefore, we can revise the PCG in (13) as (20) below:

- (20) The P-source – Copy Generalization (ii)
 Given a sentence “DP_i V_{perc} (to DP_j) like CP,”
 where V_{perc} includes SEEM, APPEAR, LOOK, SOUND, FEEL, SMELL, and TASTE,
 a pronoun coindexed with DP_i is necessary in CP iff DP_i represents non-
 firsthand evidentiality.

Furthermore, recall that Landau (2011) assimilates CR to left dislocation (cf. (16)). His proposal implies that the CR subject carries a sense of topicality.

- (21) a. [TP Subj_i [VP seem [PP as [CP Op_i [C’ if [TP ... *(pronoun_i)...]]]]]]
 b. [CP John_i Op_i [TP something terrible [T’ [VP happened *(to him_i)]]]]

From the perspective of evidentiality, topicality can be interpreted as the information that discourse participants have in a particular context. Based on these two points (i.e. CR being an instance of non-firsthand evidentiality and of left dislocation), we propose that the CR subject is interpreted as a basis for the speaker to draw an inference from. This interpretation is syntactically licensed through selection, under the assumption that the null operator (Op) is specified for the non-firsthand evidential meaning. To visualize this, we use the feature [+Evid] to refer to the non-firsthand evidentiality with which the derived predicate with Op requires its subject (i.e. the CR subject) to function

as a basis from which the speaker draws an inference. Under our proposal, the CR sentence in (22a) receives the non-firsthand evidential interpretation in (22b).¹⁰

- (22) a. John seems as if he is ill.
 b. On the basis of the information that the speaker has about John, it is inferred that he is ill.

To put it another way, the basis (information source) of the inference is realized as the CR subject, and the inferred proposition is expressed as a clausal LIKE complement. Accordingly, we assume that what binds the CR subject and the clausal LIKE complement together is the requirement that the CRV select a [+Evid] feature on its complement.

To summarize, Landau's (2011) generalization may be reduced to the distinction between firsthand and non-firsthand evidentiality, under the assumption that the CRVs select a [+Evid] feature in their complements. This feature corresponds to non-firsthand evidentiality and also evokes Op-merger. Consequently, the feature-bearing complement is able to function as a predicate, which is an open constituent that must be saturated by a subject element. In the next section, we will provide supportive evidence to strengthen our proposal.

4. Supportive Evidence

4.1. *The Definiteness of CR Subject*

The first piece of evidence comes from the definiteness effect imposed on the CR subject (e.g. Lappin (1983, 1984), Rooryck (2000)). Let us consider the following examples:

- (23) a. Cows *(always) seem like they have eaten too much grass.
 b. * Few cows seem like they have eaten too much grass.

(Rooryck (2000:57))

These indicate that the CR subject is incompatible with an existential reading. Rather, it must receive a generic or universal (therefore “definite”) interpretation (cf. (23a)). This property would naturally be captured under the present proposal because we can treat it as a reflection of the [+Evid] feature being checked and deleted for Agree. This then induces topicality on the subject, and it is syntactically encoded as the source of information for the speaker to draw an inference from.

¹⁰ Note that the example in (22a) can be an instance of non-CR if the matrix subject does not carry an interpretation of non-firsthand evidentiality. Simply put, the sentence can also be uttered when *John* is a firsthand evidential, but in that case it is not an instance of CR.

4.2. *Conjunction*

In our proposal, the CR subject receives such a non-firsthand evidential interpretation through predication as exemplified in (22). Taken together with the fact that the subject of direct perception sentences (e.g., *John looks ill*) receives a firsthand evidential interpretation, our analysis predicts that the (adjectival) predicate of such sentences and the derived predicate of CR cannot be conjoined. Now consider the following examples (cf. Asudeh (2002)):

- (24) a. ?? John looked cool or/and as if he is intelligent.
 b. ?? John sounded angry or/and as if he misunderstood her wife.

As predicted, the sentences in (24) are at best marginal. Under the present proposal, this characteristic concerned with conjunction can successfully be captured. This is because the subject in each example must meet the contradictory semantic requirement that it be interpreted as both of a direct percept (i.e. firsthand evidentiality) and a basis for the speaker to draw an inference from (i.e. non-firsthand evidentiality) at the same time. Thus, the data lend further plausibility to our proposal.

4.3. *Island Effects*

The third piece of evidence comes from island effects observed in CR. In our analysis, the clausal LIKE complement consists of a complex of a particular preposition and a null operator. This syntactic configuration implies that the relevant complement constitutes an island. To verify this prediction, let us consider the examples below provided by Rooryck (2000), which represent that CR sentences indeed show island effects:

- (25) * Which book_{*j*} does Sandy_{*i*} seem like/as if/as though she_{*i*} likes *t_j*?
 (Rooryck (2000:70))

Our informants, however, pointed out that the sentence in (25) would become acceptable if the addressee had sufficient evidence for her/him to limit possible answers to a particular set of books. Importantly, this is reminiscent of D(iscourse)-linking, pointed out by Pesetsky (1987). In general, D-linking is compatible with (referential) nominal WH-phrases, but not with reason adjuncts like WHY. Thus, we are led to predict that the extraction of WHY is impossible (or worse) in CR, and this turns out to be correct, as shown below:

- (26) a. (*) Which book_j does Sandy_i seem like/as if/as though she_i likes t_j?
 b. ?? Why_i does Sandy_j seem like/as if/as though she_j likes *Peter Pan* t_i?

(26a) is a felicitous WH-question, provided that the addressee has certain evidence to answer the question. (26b), on the other hand, is less felicitous because the reason WH-word WHY basically resists D-linking.

4.4. *The Absent Cook Situation*

The final piece of evidence comes from the “absent cook” situation discussed in Asudeh and Toivonen (2012). According to them, the expletive sentence in (27a), the raising sentence in (27b), and the CR sentence in (27c) are all acceptable in the context in which the two discourse participants are watching Tom doing something in the kitchen.

- (27) *Context*: A and B walk into Tom’s kitchen. Tom is at the stove doing something, but exactly what is unclear.
 a. It seems that Tom is cooking.
 b. Tom seems to be cooking.
 c. Tom seems like he’s cooking.

(Asudeh and Toivonen (2012:331))

By contrast, if Tom (as a potential cook) is absent, then (27c) becomes unacceptable.

- (28) *Context*: A and B walk into Tom’s kitchen. There’s no sign of Tom, but there are various things bubbling away on the stove and there are several ingredients on the counter, apparently waiting.
 a. It seems that Tom is cooking.
 b. Tom seems to be cooking.
 c. # Tom seems like he’s cooking.

(Asudeh and Toivonen (2012:331))

The unacceptability of (28c) is correctly predicted under our proposal because the discourse participants have no source of information from which they can infer that Tom is possibly cooking. In other words, the CR sentence cannot be uttered in situations where there is no sensory basis to draw an inference from. Thus, the absent cook situation in (28) is naturally accounted for under our proposal.

5. Concluding Remarks

To conclude, we have argued that CR sentences have the following two properties; (i) CRVs are restricted to the raising and perception verbs, and (ii) the clausal LIKE complement is introduced by the comparative complementizers. We have also argued that what binds these two properties is evidentiality, and more precisely, the non-firsthand evidential meaning yielded by the CR subject that is interpreted as a basis from which the speaker infers a propositional content (i.e. the propositional content expressed by the clausal LIKE complement). We have expanded this idea by slightly modifying Landau's (2011) proposal: CRVs select as their complement a derived CP predicate containing Op with [+Evid], which is in turn realized as a clausal complement.

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(Yukihiro Kanda)

Doctoral Program in Literature and Linguistics

University of Tsukuba

e-mail: yukikandajp@gmail.com

(Masatoshi Honda)

Doctoral Program in Literature and Linguistics

University of Tsukuba

e-mail: honda.masatoshi.84@gmail.com