

# An OT-driven Dynamic Pragmatics:

high-applicatives,  
subject-honorific markers  
and  
imperatives  
in Japanese



Akitaka Yamada

Georgetown University/Surugadai University

*You can find the slides here:*

<https://www.akitaka-yamada-georgetown-university.com/handout>

# 1 Introduction



# 1 Introduction

## Outline

- **Topic:** The Japanese imperative system and its interaction with high-applatives and subject-honorific markers
- **Goal:** The speech act of an utterance is determined as a consequence of interactions between pragmatic constraints.
- **Analysis:** Incorporating some important insights from the phonology of Optimality Theory (OT) (Prince and Smolesky 2004 [1993]; McCarthy and Prince 1993; Kager 1999)

# 1 Introduction

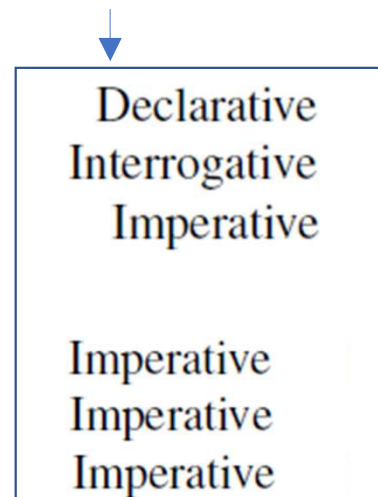
## Background/terminology

- (A) **Sentence type:** Grammatical form of a sentence
- (B) **Sentential force:** The fundamental conversational functions with which sentence types are associated.
- (C) **Illocutionary force:** The particular discourse effect/speech act that the sentence achieves

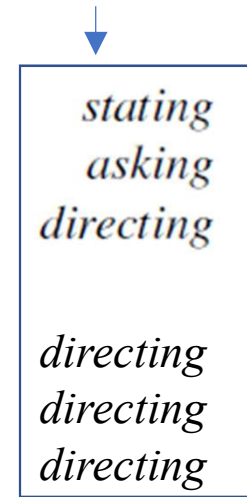
## Example

- (1) **Sentence types and sentential forces**
- Bond gives every fish to Loren.
  - Does Bond give every fish to Loren?
  - Give every fish to Loren, Bond!
- (2) **Sentence types and illocutionary forces**
- Soldiers, march!
  - Have some beer!
  - Help me!

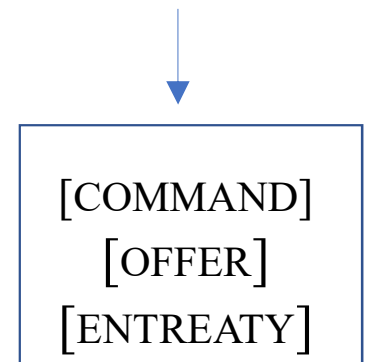
### Sentence type



### Sentential force



### Illocutionary force



# 1 Introduction

## Desiderata

- (A) One-to-many
- (B) \*One-to-any
- (C) Interaction among grammatical forms

## Example

- (1) **Sentence types and sentential forces**
  - a. Bond gives every fish to Loren.
  - b. Does Bond give every fish to Loren?
  - c. Give every fish to Loren, Bond!
- (2) **Sentence types and illocutionary forces**
  - a. Soldiers, march!
  - b. Have some beer!
  - c. Help me!

Sentence type

Declarative  
Interrogative  
Imperative

Imperative  
Imperative  
Imperative

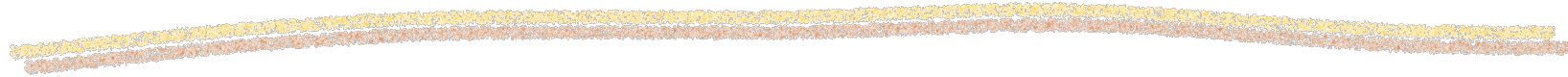
*stating*  
*asking*  
*directing*

*directing*  
*directing*  
*directing*

Illocutionary force

[COMMAND]  
[OFFER]  
[ENTREATY]


2 Data



# 2.1 Imperative suffix

## Form

- Phonologically conditioned allomorphy
  - (A) Consonant-base verb: **-e**
  - (B) Vowel-base verb: **-ro**
  - \* (C) Bare form



No Bare Form

(5) \**Gohan-o tabe!*  
beer-ACC eat  
'Eat rice! (intended)'

## Illocutionary force

- COMMAND only

- (6) a. *Koosinsi-ro!*  
march-IMP  
'March!'
- b. *Biiru-o nom-e!*  
beer-ACC drink-IMP  
'Drink beer!'
- c. *Watasi-o tasuke-ro!*  
me-ACC help-IMP  
'Help me!'
- Imperative → COMMAND
- Imperative → FAVOR
- Imperative → ENTREATY

## 2.2 Applicatives

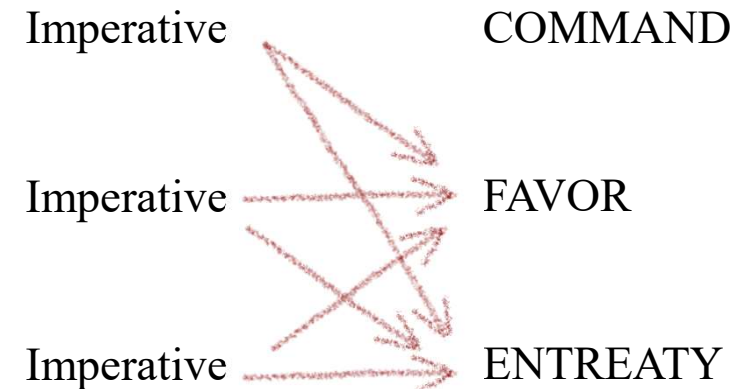
### Form

- Point-of-view applicatives (*-te kure*)
  - \* (A) Consonant-base verb: **-e**
  - \* (B) Vowel-base verb: **-ro**
  - (C) Bare form

### Illocutionary force

- Variation

- (10) a. *Koosinsi-te kure!*  
march-CV APPL<sub>H</sub>  
'March (for me)!'
- b. *Non-de kure!*  
drink-CV APPL<sub>H</sub>  
'Enjoy (for me)!'
- c. *Tasuke-te kure!*  
help-CV APPL<sub>H</sub>  
'Help me (for me)!'






# 2.2 Applicatives

## Form

- Point-of-view applicatives
  - \* (A) Consonant-base verb: **-e**
  - \* (B) Vowel-base verb: **-ro**
  - (C) Bare form



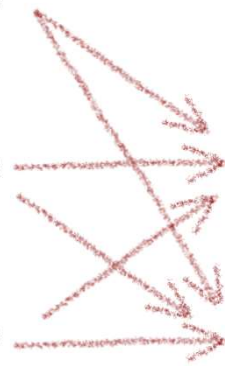
Null Hypothesis I:  
One might suspect that ...

**Imperative suffix: → Strong**

**Bare form: → Weak**

## Illocutionary force

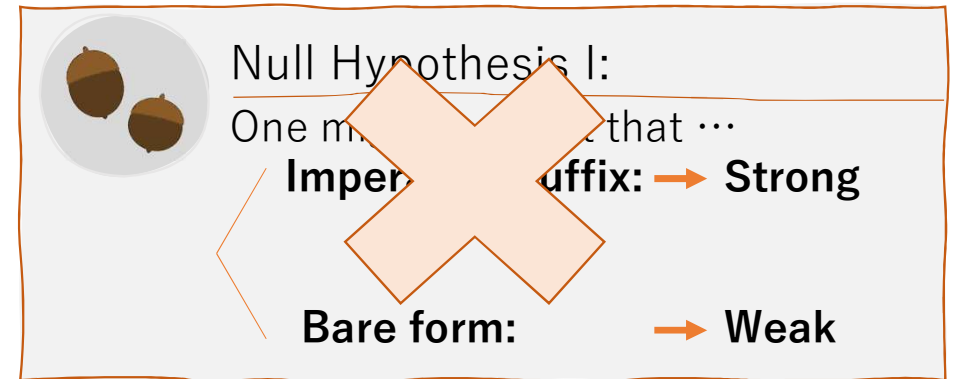
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'Enjoy (for me)!'      Imperative      FAVOR
- c. *Tasuke-te kure!*  
help-CV APPL<sub>H</sub>  
'Help me (for me)!'      Imperative      ENTREATY
- 

# 2.2 Applicatives

## Form

- Point-of-view applicatives
  - \* (A) Consonant-base verb: **-e**
  - \* (B) Vowel-base verb: **-ro**
  - (C) Bare form



## Illocutionary force

- Variation

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 ‘March (for me)!’  
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 ‘Enjoy (for me)!’  
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- c. *Tasuke-te kure!*  
 help-CV APPL<sub>H</sub>  
 ‘Help me (for me)!’  
 Imperative → ENTREATY

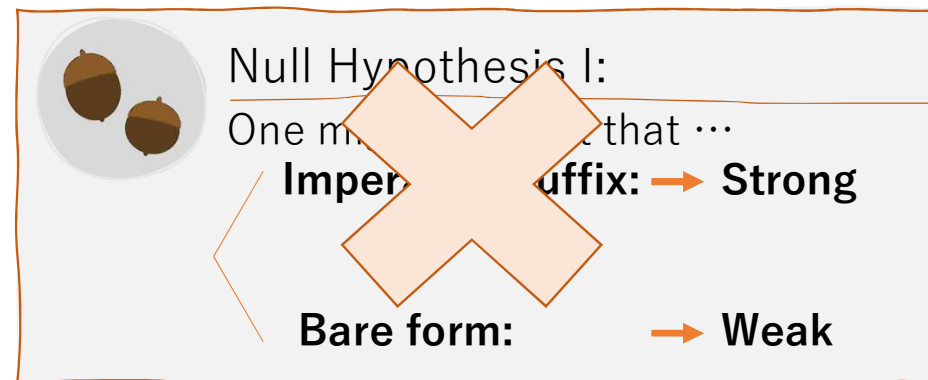
# 2.3 Subject-honorifics

**Form ( Group 1 )** -rare, o-...-ni nar-

- \* (A) Consonant-base verb: **-e**
- \* (B) Vowel-base verb: **-ro**
- \* (C) Bare form

**( Group 2 )** -nasar

- \* (A) Consonant-base verb: **-e**
- \* (B) Vowel-base verb: **-ro**
- (C) Bare form



cf. -nasar-e was acceptable in Edo period Japanese.

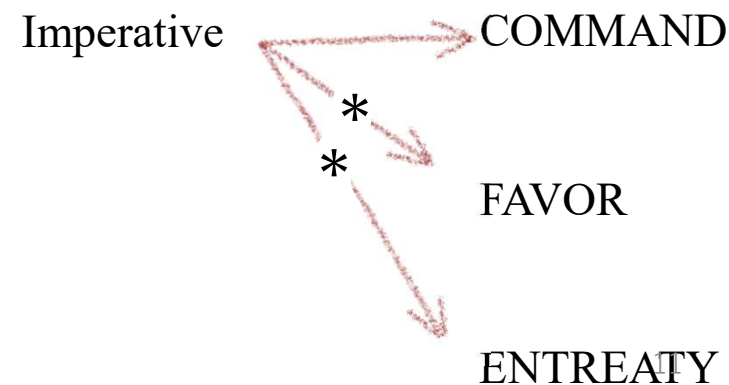
## Illocutionary force

- COMMAND only

(14) *Watasi-o tasuke-nasai!*  
I-ACC help-HONS

- ‘(i) Help me!;
- (ii) the speaker thinks that the addressee is subordinate to the speaker.’

*The honorific meaning is gone/attenuated!*




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Null Hypothesis II:  
 One might suspect that ...  
**Imperative suffix: → Strong**  
 (-i is also included)  
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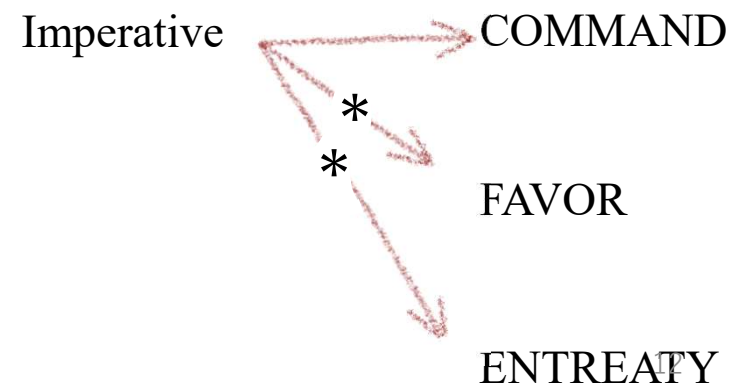
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*The honorific meaning is gone/attenuated!*



# 2.4 Subject-honorific applicatives

**Form** *-te kudasar*

- \* (A) Consonant-base verb: **-e**
- \* (B) Vowel-base verb: **-ro**
- (C) Bare form



Null Hypothesis II:  
 One might suspect that ...  
**Imperative suffix: → Strong**  
 (-i is also included)  
**Bare form: → Weak**

*cf. -kudasar-e* was acceptable in Edo period Japanese.

## Illocutionary force

(16) *Kyuusoku-o tot-te kudasai!* Imperative \* → COMMAND  
 rest-ACC take-CV APPL<sub>H</sub>.HONS

*The honorific meaning is maintained!*

‘(i) (Please) Take a rest!;  
 (ii) the speaker respects the addressee.’

FAVOR

ENTREATY

## 2.4 Puzzles: interim summary

### Desiderata

#### ( 1 ) One-to-many property

- The bare form exhibits one-to-many property, just as English imperatives do.

#### ( 2 ) \*One-to-any property

- COMMAND is not allowed in a bare imperative.

#### ( 3 ) Interaction among grammatical forms

- Subject-honorifics** encode the speaker's respect for the addressee, unless they are used in an imperative.
- Point-of-view applicatives** cannot be used with imperatives suffixes.
- The imperatives suffixes** are associated with COMMAND.
- The bare form** is associated anything but COMMAND, iff there is a 'point-of-view' applicative marker. Otherwise, it is associated with COMMAND.

3 Proposal



# 3 Proposal

## Basic idea

### Illocutionary Force Assignment:

#### ( Approach 1 ) Semantics

We bring a conceptually unmotivated complexity into semantics.

(17)  $[[\text{HONs}]]$

$$= \begin{cases} \lambda p. p \bullet \text{the addressee is subordinate to the addressee (if it is in an imperative)} \\ \lambda p. p \bullet \text{the speaker respects the addressee (otherwise)} \end{cases}$$

#### ( Approach 2 ) Pragmatics

I propose that we can provide a formal pragmatic algorithm concerning the illocutionary force assignment.



# 3.1 Backgrounds

## Dynamic pragmatics

Pragmatic rules play a pivotal role in context update  
(Stalnaker 1978; Gazdar 1981; Lewis 1979; Roberts 1996; Portner 2004).

## Structured discourse context

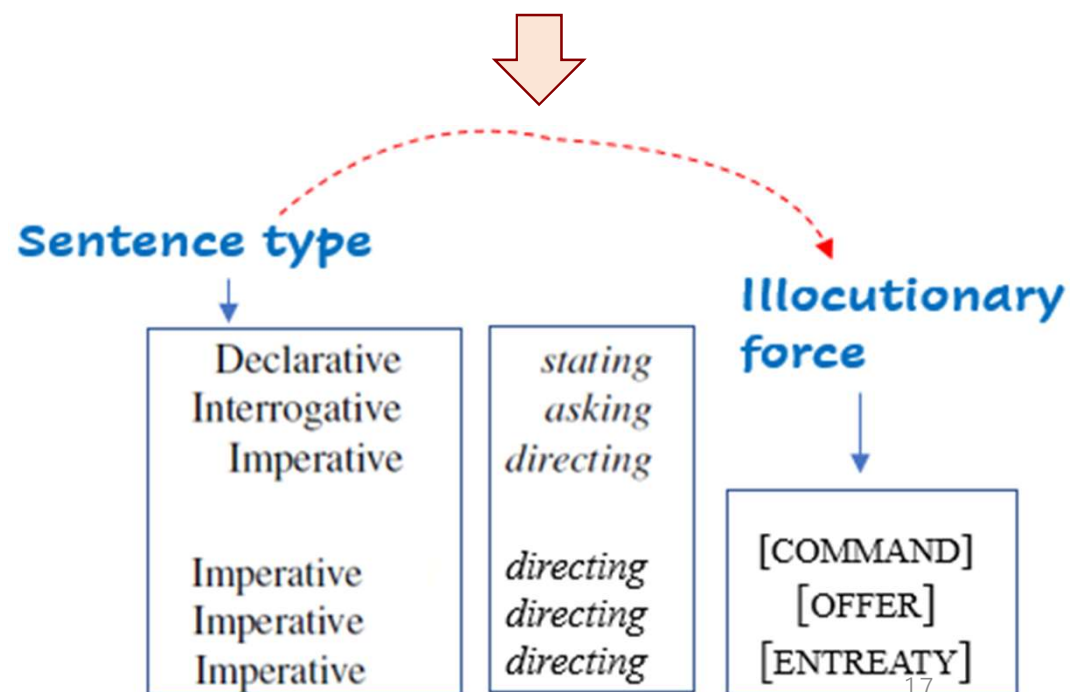
(18)  $c = \langle cg, qs, tdl, h \rangle$   
Hierarchical relation is stored.

## Authority

(19)  $h \in \{ \langle sp, addr \rangle, \langle addr, sp \rangle \}$

## Example

- (19')a.  $c = \langle cg, qs, tdl, \langle sp, addr \rangle \rangle$   
b.  $c' = \langle cg, qs, tdl, \langle sp, addr \rangle \rangle$   
c.  $c' = \langle cg, qs, tdl, \langle addr, sp \rangle \rangle$



## 3.2 An OT-driven dynamic pragmatics

### Consistency

(20) **Consistency:** after the context update, the new  $h$  must be either  $\langle sp, addr \rangle$  or  $\langle addr, sp \rangle$ , but it cannot take both simultaneously.

➡ Before updating the context, we must adjudicate our decision.

### Authority

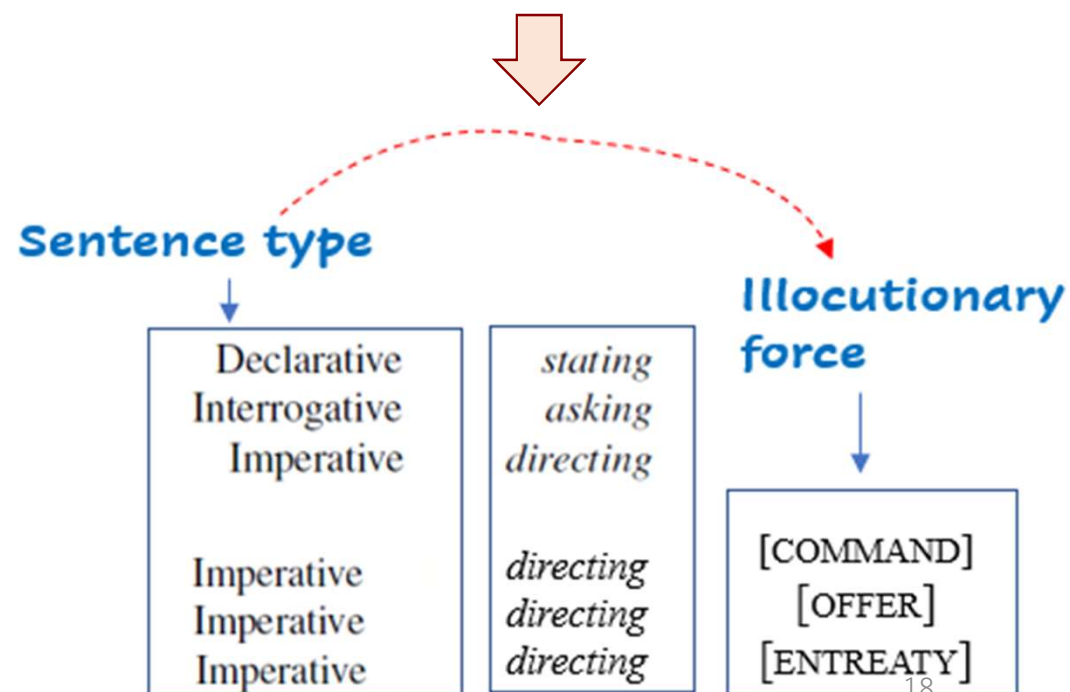
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### Adjudication: *a la* OT-phonology

#### Example:

(10) a. *Koosinsi-te kure!*  
march-CV APPL<sub>H</sub>  
'March (for me)!'

Step 1. Richness of the Base

Step 2. Assessment

	Constraint 1	Constraint 2
$\langle (10), \textit{COMMAND} \rangle$	*	
☞ $\langle (10), \textit{FAVOR} \rangle$		*
☞ $\langle (10), \textit{ENTREATY} \rangle$		*
☞ $\langle (10), \dots \rangle$		*

# 3.2 An OT-driven dynamic pragmatics

## Pragmatic constraints




- (21)a. Imperative forms (both *-e/ro* and  $\emptyset$ ): **sp** is in AUTHORITY.  
 b. Point-of-view applicatives: **addr** is in AUTHORITY (when the subj = the addr).  
 c. Subject honorifics: **addr** is in AUTHORITY (when the subj = the addr).

## Authority and Illocutionary forces

- (21') a. COMMAND: **sp** is in AUTHORITY.  
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# 3.2 An OT-driven dynamic pragmatics

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Step 1. Richness of the Base

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	APPL	IMP	Subj HON
< (10), <i>COMMAND</i> >	*		
 < (10), <i>FAVOR</i> >		*	
 < (10), <i>ENTREATY</i> >		*	
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## Authority and Illocutionary forces

- (21') a. COMMAND: **sp** is in AUTHORITY.  
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### Example:

- (6) a. *Koosinsi-ro!*  
 march-IMP  
 'March!'

	APPL	IMP	Subj HON
 < (6), <i>COMMAND</i> >			
< (6), <i>FAVOR</i> >		*	
< (6), <i>ENTREATY</i> >		*	
< (6), ... >		*	

Step 1. Richness of the Base

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### Example:

(14) *Watasi-o tasuke-nasai!*  
 I-ACC help-HONs

‘(i) Help me!; (ii) the speaker thinks that the addressee is subordinate to the speaker.’

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	APPL	IMP	Subj HON
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‘(i) Please take a rest!; (ii) the speaker respects the addressee.’

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< (16), ... >		*	

# 4 Conclusion






# 4 Conclusion and implications

## How this analysis achieves the desiderata

### 2.4 Puzzles: interim summary

#### Desiderata

- (1) **One-to-many property**
  - The bare form exhibits one-to-many property, just as English imperatives do.
- (2) **\*One-to-any property**
  - COMMAND is not allowed in a bare imperative.
- (3) **Interaction among grammatical forms**
  - A. **Subject-honorifics** encode the speaker's respect for the addressee, unless they are used in an imperative.
  - B. **Point-of-view applicatives** cannot be used with imperatives suffixes.
  - C. **The imperatives suffixes** are associated with COMMAND.
  - D. **The bare form** is associated with non COMMAND, iff there is a 'point-of-view' applicative marker. Otherwise, it is associated with COMMAND.

	APPL	IMP	Subj HON
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 < (16), ... >		*	

**Form to context** (26) form/meaning → AUTHORITY/illocutionary force assignment → context update

Pragmatic constraints:

- (i) which discourse participant is in AUTHORITY  
and
- (ii) an appropriate illocutionary force for that sentence

# 4 Conclusion and implications

## For future studies

Addressee-honorific markers also exhibit an interaction with sentence types.

(27) Addressee-honorific markers in imperatives

Japanese

a. *Ie-de odor-e!*

house-at dance-IMP

‘Dance at home!’ (a strong imperative)

b. \**Ie-de odori-mas-e!*

house-at dance-HON<sub>A</sub>-IMP

‘Dance at home!’ (a weak imperative reading is intended).

(28) Burmese imperatives

(Kato 2018: 574)

a. *?èiN-hmà kâ.*

house-at dance

‘Dance at home!’

b. *?èiN-hmà kâ-bà.*

house-at dance-HON<sub>A</sub>

‘Dance at home!’

*Burmese addressee-honorific markers play a similar role as Japanese ‘point-of-view’ applicatives.*

Yamada, A. (to appear) Syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of Japanese addressee-honorific marker. Ph. D. Thesis. Georgetown University.

**Thank you very much  
for your attention!**

