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A Corpus Study Based on the Correspondence
of an American Board Missionary, Mary Florence Denton

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Mary Florence Denton came to Japan as a missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in 1888, at the age of 31, and devoted her life to teaching at Doshisha Girls' School, Kyoto, Japan. Between 1888 and 1919, she exchanged letters with several corresponding secretaries of ABCFM to inform them of the situation at Doshisha Girls' School, and the number of letters reached 58. Fifteen letters addressed to Dr. Nathaniel G. Clark, the then-corresponding secretary of ABCFM, between 1888 and 1894 are the subject of this thesis. The purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the linguistic and content features in the correspondence of Mary Florence Denton.

To analyze the types and frequency of English words, the free concordance software *AntConc* developed by Professor Anthony Lawrence of Waseda University, the *New JACET 8000*, and the analysis tool *Official King James Bible on Line* are used. As a result, the following linguistic features are identified. The results show that, as linguistic features, Mary Florence Denton tended to use indefinite articles less frequently and to write sentences closer to the spoken language. It was also found that she tended to use infrequent words and spelling, which was influenced by words in the Bible. She also described her work of evangelism as “grand work” and regarded it as a great work and respected it. As for the content of her letters, she used a variety of expressions at the end and at the conclusion of her letters, using different words each time to express her feelings. She also paid attention to what her students were saying and doing, and Mary Florence Denton herself showed an attitude of learning from her students. There were also many references to money in the letters. It can be inferred that she was thrifty and had a well-developed sense of economy. However, it was determined that her economic thinking was not selfish, but altruistic for the

sake of the school administration, students, and other teachers. It can be concluded that the letters written by Mary Florence Denton have revealed, albeit partially, the humanity buried in her mind.