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Studies in Language Sciences 1

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The Japanese Society for Language Sciences

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Preface

The Japanese Society for Language Sciences (JSLS) was founded in August, 1999, with the objective of bringing together researchers from diverse academic disciplines who hold a common goal: understanding human language. The Society holds a conference once a year and publishes the proceedings to promote scientific exchange and discussions among researchers from different disciplines and approaches. We believe that this volume has successfully achieved this goal. The scope of JSLS includes topics such as first and second language acquisition, language processing, language disorders, speech perception, phonology, semantics, syntax, pragmatics, discourse, bilingualism, sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics, and comparative linguistics.

JSLS differs from other academic societies in Japan in the following aspects. First, we provide a forum for intellectual exchange and discussions among researchers from diverse disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, education, second language teaching, and speech and communication sciences. Second, JSLS is a Japanese society but is intended to be an international rather than a local society. We provide an English and Japanese bilingual forum to promote international scientific exchange among researchers throughout the world. We have Japanese and English bilingual web pages (<http://jchat.sccs.chukyo-u.ac.jp/JSLS/>). Conference presentations are made in either Japanese or English. Papers are published in the proceedings in either language. We also make special efforts to seek experts throughout the world who best qualify to review papers regardless of their nationality.

The idea of forming a new society for language sciences was born among active members of the JCHAT Japanese CHILDES project in 1997 when a research forum was held for L1 and L2 acquisition researchers using CHILDES (Child Language Data Exchange System) as part of the JCHAT/CHILDES tutorial workshop at Tokyo Woman's Christian University in Tokyo. The forum gained good participation from diverse academic groups and provided an exciting opportunity for intellectual exchange and discussion on language acquisition across disciplines. Since such an opportunity was almost non-existent in Japan, active members of the JCHAT project worked together to form a new society. The Japanese name of the society, JCHAT *genko kagaku kenkyuu kai* (JCHAT Language Science Society), reflects this history. However, the scope of the new society is not limited to research using the JCHAT/CHILDES tools and database. Rather, the basis of the society is our common recognition that the complex nature of human language could not be understood without integrating knowledge gained from different disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, speech sciences, neurosciences, and education. To make this endeavor a successful one, we need more participation from different disciplines. We encourage the active participation of members from different disciplines to help the society grow. We welcome suggestions and proposals for future activities to facilitate international as well as interdisciplinary collaboration and interaction.

Yuriko Oshima-Takane
President

Montreal, July, 2000

A Note from the Editors

YURIKO OSHIMA-TAKANE, McGill University, YASUHIRO SHIRAI, Cornell University, and HIDEIOSI SIRAI, Chukyo University*

This is the first volume of *Studies in Language Sciences*, the publication of the new Japanese Society for Language Sciences (<http://jchat.sccs.chukyo-u.ac.jp/JSLS/>). The volume consists of papers from the first annual conference of the society that was held on August 7 and 8, 1999 at Sophia University in Tokyo. This inaugural volume includes Brian MacWhinney's plenary, papers from the invited symposium and commentaries from the discussants, and general session papers presented at the conference. It includes fourteen full-length papers and two commentaries.

In this note, we would like to briefly describe the editorial process for the first volume of *Studies in Language Sciences*. In editing this inaugural volume, we tried to ensure a high quality for the papers, and all the papers from the general sessions were sent out to outside experts for review. We sought reviewers who we thought best qualified to review each paper regardless of their affiliation or nationality. This resulted in an impressive list of reviewers from the United States (12), Japan (9), Canada (4), Europe (3), UK (2), and Australia (1). For papers written in English about the Japanese language, we tried to choose at least one reviewer who does not know Japanese, as well as one who understands Japanese. This is because papers written in English should be written in such a way that researchers with little knowledge of Japanese can easily understand them. Some of the submitted papers were written in Japanese and therefore could only be reviewed by those who read Japanese, but we believe the list of the reviewers' names reflects our commitment to the quality of the volume as well as to the promotion of our annual conference as an international forum for academic exchange. We would like to thank the following referees for writing extensive and thoughtful comments, which contributed to the quality of the final product tremendously. (The discrepancy with the above numbers is only because some of the reviewers have not replied to our message in which we asked for permission to have their names listed in the volume.)

Michael Akiyama, David Birdsong, Nick Ellis, Fred Genesee, Mari Haneda, Etsuko Hatano, Yukiko Abe Hatasa, Mariko Hayashi, Mutsumi Imai, Gabriel Kasper, Elizabeth Lanza, Roy Lyster, Kazumi Matsuoka, Yoichi Miyamoto, Susanne Miyata, Hiromi Morikawa, Takashi Muto, Mineharu Nakayama, Elena Nicoladis, Barbara Pan, Matthew Rispoli, Tetsuya Sano, Miyuki Sasaki, Yoshinori Sasaki, Natsuko Tsujimura, Yoshie Yamashita, Patricia Zukow-Goldring

Most papers required two rounds of revisions, first a major one based on the referees' and the editors' comments, and then a minor revision before publication. For this volume we did not send out the revised version to the outside experts -- mainly due to time constraints. Thirteen papers from the general session were submitted for publication, of which 10 are included in this volume. The review of the invited papers was done by the editors, although we asked outside experts for help when needed.

It was our goal as the editors of the first volume to produce a high quality volume, to which researchers in the language sciences would wish to submit their papers. We followed a standard review procedure that is commonly used by international refereed journals. We believe we achieved this goal to a good extent, although there is room for improvement. We welcome suggestions from readers, JSLS members, authors and referees so that we can create a volume that is truly valuable for language researchers not only of Japan but also for the international scientific community. This is a first step, which we believe is a good one.

July, 2000
Montreal, Ithaca and Toyota

*The order of the editors is alphabetical.

*This volume is published as a technical report from the School of Computer and Cognitive Sciences at Chukyo University. We would like to thank them for their assistance.

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Plenary

Invited Symposium

New perspectives in language acquisition

YURIKO OSHIMA-TAKANE, McGill University

HARUMI KOBAYASHI, Kyoritsu Women's University

Since the Child Language Data Exchange System (CHILDES) was established, the scope and the nature of language acquisition research has changed radically. However, we are still far from attaining a full account of language acquisition. This may reflect the current state of how language acquisition research is carried out. In linguistics, it has been traditional to focus more on the analysis of the end-product (adult speaker competence), whereas in psychology more attention has been paid to the development and learning process. However, in order to fully understand how children acquire a language, accounts of both the learning process and adult competence should be integrated. The purpose of the present symposium was to bring together scholars from linguistics and psychology who have different perspectives on language competence. They each presented their recent analysis and findings on Japanese nouns and verbs. Mari Takahashi, a generative grammar theorist, presented a new analysis of the adverb+ *su* construction in Japanese and pointed out its structural similarity with light-*su* construction. Shigenori Tanaka, a cognitive linguist, presented a process model of meaning with detailed references to a Japanese action verb “waru”. Harumi Kobayashi, a developmental psychologist, talked about the importance of affordances in object word learning and presented empirical findings from Japanese-speaking children. Two discussants, Giyoo Hatano and Brian MacWhinney, commented on each paper and discussed the implications of the presentations for the acquisition of nouns and verbs and future directions of language acquisition research. The papers contributed to this volume are based on those presented at the symposium, but have been expanded to incorporate insights and ideas gained from the conference.