

Child Language Bulletin

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IN MEMORIAM: PROFESSOR ROGER BROWN

by Dan Slobin

The field of psychology owes a tremendous debt to Roger Brown, who has passed away at age 72. Our field of child language has lost a father--a parent who gave us our voice and many of our first words and sentences. It is not only that he gave us Adam, Eve, and Sarah, and MLU, and the 14 grammatical morphemes, and the five stages of language development. Those contributions are foundational in themselves. But he also gave us a breadth of vision, anchored in the social sciences and humanities--a humane and literate vision. And he gave us an enduring model of clear thinking, based on systematic, honest, and careful use of data.

Brown also gave us a model of sharing data that long antedated our CHILDES databases. Already in the sixties, he generously and graciously allowed students and colleagues to comb through the transcripts, and he was delighted with the nuggets that we found. Now, with the original data in CHILDES, there are scores of studies of Adam, Eve, and Sarah.

Brown was devoted to the data of child language in an era when heated debate was more concerned with large-scale theory and formalism. Never dogmatic, he offered a modest "third-person" appraisal of his work in the Festschrift that Frank Kessel edited in his honour in 1988: "Of 'A First Language'" Brown says it does not explain how the acquisition of language was possible. But it did establish some empirical generalizations that have held up very well in subsequent research." Indeed, that work is probably cited in hundreds of child language publications, worldwide, and serves as a benchmark for a host of developmental studies. And Brown's work has also left its mark on our theorising, focusing on such enduring issues as cognitive prerequisites,

input, and strategies of attention, generalization, and memory.

Roger Brown was also a genuine teacher--a gifted lecturer, brilliantly lucid textbook writer, and a mentor with attentive regard to his students' thinking and writing. Anyone who had the privilege of studying with him will remember his detailed feedback, handwritten with a Number 2 wooden pencil. Again, with characteristic modesty, he thanks the many students who contributed to his Festschrift, writing: "Thank you for all that I have learned from you and am still learning from you." The best tribute our field can offer is to return these thanks. We and our students will still be learning from Roger Brown as we move through the next century.

REFERENCES

- Brown, R. (1973). *A first language: The early stages*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kessel, F. S. (Ed.) (1988). *The development of language and language researchers: Essays in honor of Roger Brown*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

UPDATE: PUBLICATIONS FROM VIIITH IASCL, ISTANBUL, JULY 1996

Children's Language, Volumes 10 and 11. Editors: Keith Nelson, Ayhan Aksu-Koç and Carolyn Johnson

The editors and publisher have agreed that the papers merit two volumes. The first on narrative and discourse development will consist of chapters each of which address all or most of the following issues:

- i. General narrative and discourse development, acquisition models
- ii. Cognitive developmental capacities/processes in relation to narrative and discourse
- iii. The theoretical challenge of specifying

how/when new representations are constructed to support new complexities in narrative and discourse

iv. Interfaces between specific devices within a language and narrative & discourse development

v. Emotions, emotion-regulation, and conflicts between real/fictitious conversational partners

In the second, on interactional contributions to development, chapters will participate in all or most of the following issues:

i. Scaffolding of processing and learning in particular interactional sequences

ii. Bilingual and cross-linguistic similarities and differences

iii. Linkages between interpersonal functions/relations, cognitive development, and semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic devices/forms

iv. Theoretical models of how interactions proceed, input gets selected, and learning advances across multiple rounds of interaction

These volumes will be going into production later this year.

Perspectives on Language Acquisition: Selected Papers from the VIIth International Congress for the Study of Child Language. Editors: Ayhan Aksu-Koç, Eser Erguvanli-Taylan, A. Sumru Ozsoy & Aylin Kuntay

This is now complete and is currently at the printers. Expected publication date: mid July.

BOOK NOTICES

Deshmukh, D. (1997) *Sign Language and Bilingualism in Deaf Education*. Available from author: Deshmukh Nursing Home, Sangram Chowk, Ichalkaranji-416 115, Maharashtra, India

Gillis, S. and A. De Houwer (eds) (1998) *The Acquisition of Dutch*. With contributions by: Catherine Snow, Annick De Houwer and Steven Gillis, Florian Koopmans-van Beinum and Jeannette van der Stelt, Paula Fikkert, Frank Wijnen and Maaïke Verrips, Loekie Elbers and Anita van Loon-Vervoorn. John Benjamins

Lanza, E. (1996) *Language mixing in infant bilingualism: a sociolinguistic perspective* Oxford University Press

Slobin, D.I. (ed) (1997) *The Crosslinguistic Study of Language Acquisition*. Vols 4 & 5. Lawrence Erlbaum. Vol 4 includes contributions by Lisa Dasinger (on Estonian, Finnish & Hungarian), Jorma Toivainen (on Finnish), Ursula Stephany (on Greek) and

Young-joo Kim (on Korean). Vol 5 includes contributions by Dan Slobin; Anne Peters; Elena Lieven;

IN MEMORIAM

MARGREET VAN IERLAND (1947-1998)

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Margreet van Ierland on February 13, 1998. Margreet was most recently affiliated with the Department of General Linguistics of the University of Amsterdam, where she started teaching and doing research in child language development and disorders in 1974. She was also active in Effatha, the Institute for the Deaf in Voorburg, the Netherlands, and in speech therapy programs in Rotterdam.

As a result of her research, Margreet developed a frequently used language screening-instrument for Dutch-speaking children between the ages of 4 and 8, the STAP (Spontane Taal Analyse Procedure, Spontaneous Language Analysis Procedure). She was the founder of the WAP, the 'Werkverband Amsterdamse Psycholinguïsten' (an association of psycholinguists working in the Dutch language area, started in Amsterdam but now with members in the Netherlands and Belgium). She was also active in Pandora, an advocacy association for psychiatric patients.

Margreet always aimed to integrate theoretical insights from language development and language pathology on the one hand and practical applications of these insights in speech and language therapy. Much of the recent work carried out in Dutch child language research has benefited greatly from Margreet's pioneering work. Her constant enthusiasm, sharp intellect and real concern for children's well-being were a stimulating and inspiring example to her colleagues and her students.

It is a tribute to Margreet that her work and dedication continue to set an example long after she had to give up her professional involvement as she became more and more ill. Her death will not detract from that.

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

July 19-24, 1998. International Pragmatics Conference, Reims, France.
Contact: IprA Secretariat, ipra@uia.ua.ac.be.

Sept. 4-6, 1998, Child Language Seminar, Department of Human Communication Sciences, University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2TA, UK. Website: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/uni/academic/R-Z/spsu/conf.html>

Nov. 6-8, 1998, Boston University
Conference of Language Development, 704
Commonwealth ve, Suite 101, Boston, MA
02215, USA. Website: [http://web.bu.edu/
LINGUISTICS/APPLIED/conference.html](http://web.bu.edu/LINGUISTICS/APPLIED/conference.html)

Nov. 19-22, 1998, American Speech-
Language-Hearing Association, San Antonio,
TX, U.S.A. Contact: ASHA, 301-897-5700.

Apr. 15-18, 1999, Society for Research in
Child Development, Albuquerque,
NM, U.S.A. Website:
<http://www.journals.uchicago.edu/SRCD>.

August 2-6, 1999, World Congress of
Applied Linguistics, Tokyo, Japan.
Website: [http://langue.hyper.chubu.ac.jp/
jacet/AILA99](http://langue.hyper.chubu.ac.jp/jacet/AILA99) Fax: 81-3-3586-4531.

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(1) Payment in dollars: please send check or money order for US\$35.00 (regular members) or US\$20.00 (student members) to Philip Dale, President IASCL, Dept. of Psychology, Box 351525, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195, USA. Make checks payable to IASCL.

(2) Payment in Belgian francs: fees are 1100 Belgian francs (regular) or 600 Belgian francs (student). You have 3 payment options:

(i) Eurocheque (made out to Annick De Houwer NOT to IASCL). Please send to A. De Houwer Treasurer IASCL, UIA-PSW, Universiteit-splein 1, B2610 Antwerpen, Belgium.

(ii) direct bank transfer to postal account number 000-1595604-51 in the name of Annick De Houwer, Hoge Aardstraat 97, B2610 Antwerpen, Belgium. Please ensure bank charges are already paid. If this is not possible, please add 600 Belgian francs to the amount to cover bank charges.

(iii) a postal money order in Belgian francs. Please send to Annick De Houwer, Treasurer IASCL, UIA-PSW, Universiteitsplein 1, B2610 Antwerpen, Belgium.

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Subscription rates for institutions are £93, US \$156 and for individuals £43, US \$69. For IASCL members: £35 for members outside North America plus appropriate VAT if not registered, and US \$56 for members in the USA, Canada and Mexico. Prices include delivery by air. To subscribe send payment to:

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First Language:

IASCL Subscription rates for 1998 are £22.00 (UK); US\$48 (Canada, North and South America and Japan and £25.00 (Rest of the World). Members not currently subscribing should send payment with their order to:

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International Journal of Bilingualism

Thanks to the efforts of Annick de Houwer, the IASCL and the International Journal of Bilingualism have arranged for a special rate subscription for IASCL members. This relatively new journal provides an international forum for the dissemination of original research on the linguistic, psychological, neurological, and social issues which emerge from language contact. This research focuses on the language behavior of the bi- and multilingual individual and on the cross-linguistic studies of language acquisition, development, and impairment. In addition to full-length research papers, the IJB publishes case studies, field observations, short scholarly notes, and critical review articles.

For the 1998 volume (3 issues), the special rate is £23 (EU), \$40 (North America), and £25/\$40 (rest of the world). For the 1999 volume (4 issues), the special rate is £36 (EU), \$62 (North America), and £36/\$60 (rest of the world). If you wish to subscribe, please contact the subscription address of the IJB:

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BULLETIN OF CHILD LANGUAGE

The Bulletin of Child Language is published once or twice a year. Contributions (book notices/reviews, conference information, notices of theses completed, etc) should be sent to the editor:

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