

The University of Kansas

Department of Linguistics

Special points of interest:

WELCOME!!!

Channing Payne & Stephanie Smiros have been hired as office assistants.

KUDOS!!!

Jeffrey Shouse won a Dingwall Neuroscience fellowship.

José Alemán-Bañón received the FY 08-09 Ingemann award.

Emma Rothbrust received the FY 08-09 Linguistics award.

Wendy Herd obtained an NSF Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant for her project "The perceptual and production (re)training of allophones and phonemes in L2 Spanish".

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Message from the Chair



2008

was a year of tremendous growth for Linguistics, reflecting the reputation and visibility of our faculty and current students. Undergraduate enrollments in-

creased and so did the number of Linguistics majors (from 63 last year to 75 this year), a trend that we expect to continue. At the graduate level, the number and quality of applicants also increased.

Our faculty continue to be productive, publishing papers and presenting research at conferences all around the globe, thereby enhancing the department's reputation. Faculty also were highly successful at securing federal funding from both the National Science Foundation (Jie Zhang) and the National Institutes of Health (Rob Fiorentino). And our graduate students were equally competitive, obtaining scholarships from the National Science Foundation (Wendy Herd) and the William Orr Dingwall Foundation (Jeff Shouse).

Financial support of our graduate students remains one of our priorities; in order to compete for the strongest students, we have to be able to offer incoming students guaranteed funding for 4-5 years. Increases

in external funding translate into a greater number of Graduate Research Assistantships to support our students. The addition of a faculty-taught component of our Introductory Linguistics course allowed us to offer one more Graduate Teaching Assistantship as well.

Last fall, Prof. Akira Yamamoto received the College Career Achievement Teaching Award. Having retired in 2007 after 34 years on the faculty in both Linguistics and Anthropology, Akira remains a leader in the field of the documentation and revitalization of endangered languages. While Akira will be missed as a teacher, there is no doubt that his work with endangered languages will carry on. Prof. Arienne Dwyer (Anthropology) will continue to teach Akira's popular "Language in Culture and Society" as well as a number of other courses cross-listed with Linguistics and we would like to congratulate Prof. Dwyer on her promotion to Associate Professor of Anthropology.

Finally, we are very pleased to announce that Dr. Utako Minai (Ph.D. Maryland) will be joining the department as Assistant Professor in August of 2009. Dr. Minai works on children's acquisition of meaning. Our next newsletter will contain a full profile of her research and teaching interests.

Allard Jongman

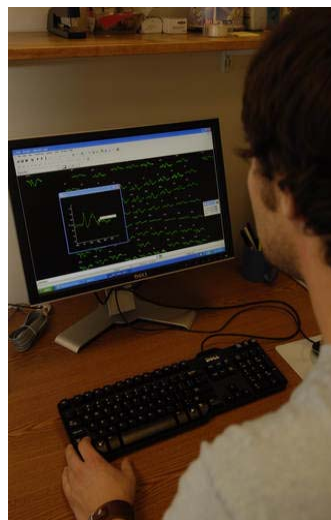
Robert Fiorentino—NIH Grant



Prof. Robert Fiorentino received a grant from the National Institutes of Health to support his project *Timing and neural bases of complex word recognition: electrophysiological studies*. This project will run from 2008-2011 and support a number of undergraduate and graduate students. The abstract follows:

Understanding the cognitive processes and brain mechanisms with which words are stored and retrieved from the mental lexicon is critical to our understanding of how language is organized in the human brain. Fundamental aspects of this process, however, remain unclear. A major debate concerns whether complex words like 'teacup' are stored and retrieved in terms of smaller parts called morphemes (tea/cup), or whether all words are treated alike as whole-word chunks. As these views make fundamentally distinct predictions regarding the nature of word representations, investigating complex words becomes crucial. This project involves recording brain activity using high temporal resolution magnetoencephalography (MEG) during complex word processing, allowing real-time measurement of the stages of word recognition and their brain-level instantiation, prior to any overt judgment such as reaction time. Utilizing these time-sensitive brain-level measurements provides a new way forward in investigating whether the mental lexicon involves internally-structured representations, the time course and constraints on their decomposition, and what cortical mechanisms subservise these computations. Specifically, the timing and neural bases of complex word processing will be examined by taking advantage of the specific linguistic properties of compound words, allowing careful

manipulation of variables that may constrain decomposition, in ways difficult or impossible when examining affixed (e.g. past-tense) words only. Establishing whether the brain initially processes both known complex words (e.g., 'teacup') and novel words which may have meaningful word parts (e.g. 'drugrack') in terms of those meaningful word parts will inform our understanding of whether the meaningful word part or the whole-word is the basic unit of representation in word recognition. Further, measuring brain responses to compound words with relatively transparent meaning relations (e.g. 'teacup') and those without (like 'honeymoon'), provides a direct test of whether, when, and with what underlying neural mechanisms words are recognized, and in particular whether meaningful word parts constitute a fundamental level of word representation independent of the levels of word form and word meaning. Developing a fuller neurocognitive model of word reading has direct health-related impact for addressing the range of language disorders involving word recognition and reading deficits, including dyslexia, Specific Language Impairment, aphasia, and Alzheimer's disease, increasing the potential for identifying new treatments for these deficits, many of which



involve pervasive yet poorly understood problems with word parts. Further, the MEG assays developed may provide sensitive new tools for diagnosing and directly measuring brain-level effects of therapy in clinical intervention.

Jie Zhang—NSF Grant



Prof. Jie Zhang received a grant from the National Science Foundation to support his project *Testing the productivity of Chinese tone sandhi*. This project will run from 2008-2012 and support a number of undergraduate and graduate students. The abstract follows: The majority of the world's languages are tone languages.

In Mandarin, for example, the syllable "ma" said with a high level pitch has a completely different meaning from the same syllable said with a high-to-low falling pitch ("mother" vs. "to scold"). The tone on a syllable sometimes changes according to the linguistic context in which it is found; this process is known as "tone sandhi." In

Mandarin a mid-low-high dipping tone will change to a mid-high rising tone when it is placed immediately before another dipping tone. The patterns of tone sandhi in a language can be extremely intricate, and many mysteries remain unsolved as to how speakers internalize these patterns. This project investigates the extent to which native speakers of various Chinese dialects can apply tone sandhi patterns to novel words. The results will shed light on the nature of phonological knowledge, in particular, whether articulatory constraints, perceptual distinctiveness, and the lexical frequencies of tone sandhi patterns constitute part of the knowledge that speakers have about the tone system of their language. Due to the international nature of the research, the project also fosters collaborative relations between U.S. and Chinese institutions.

Welcome New Graduate Students!

Rania Al-Aqarbeh—Jordan—MA in Linguistics from Mu'tah University—Research: second language acquisition and syntax.

Mohammed Almalahmeh—Jordan—MA in Applied Linguistics from Mu'tah University—Research: syntax, semantics, phonology.

Atef Alsarayreh—Jordan—MA in Applied Linguistics from Mu'tah University—Research: syntax, acquisition of syntax.

Turki Abdullah Binturki—Saudi Arabia—MA in Applied Linguistics and TESOL from Southern Illinois University—Research: language acquisition.

Hiba E. Gharib—Iraq—MA in Linguistics from Sulaimany University—Research: semantics and pragmatics.

Jiang Liu—China—MSc in Speech & Language Processing from the University of Edinburgh—Research: phonetics-based phonology, prosody, Chinese tone.

Beatriz Lopez Prego—Spain—MA in English Philology from the University of Santiago De Compostela—Research: second language acquisition.

Valeria Mongush—Russia—BA in Linguistics and Cross-cultural Communication from Tomsk State University—Research: second and third language acquisition.

Stephen Politzer-Ahles—United States—BA in Chinese Language from Kenyon College—Research: neurolinguistics, sentence parsing, Chinese syntax.

Breanna Steidley—United States—BA in Spanish from the University of Wyoming—Research: phonetics, phonology, and second language acquisition.

Brad Weiss—United States—BA in Linguistics from the University of Kansas—Research: historical linguistics, phonology, Latin languages.

Faculty News

- Prof. Robert Fiorentino** received a three-year NIH grant for his project *Timing and Neural Bases of Complex Word Recognition: Electrophysiological Studies*. He published an article in *Brain and Language* and presented his research at the International Conference on the Mental Lexicon in Banff, Canada and the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society in Washington, DC.
- Prof. Alison Gabriele** continued her research on the L2 acquisition of aspect. She published an article in the *EUROSLA Yearbook* and had papers accepted for publication in *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* and *International Journal of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*. Prof. Gabriele gave an invited talk in Sendai, Japan at the conference Mental Architecture for Processing and Learning of Language and also presented her research at the Boston University Conference on Language Development.
- Prof. Allard Jongman** published his book *Phonetics: Transcription, Production, Acoustics, and Perception*, co-authored with Prof. Henning Reetz (Frankfurt, Germany). He published an article in *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* and presented his research at the annual meeting of the Acoustical Society of America in Miami.
- Prof. Clifton Pye** continued his NSF-funded research to document Mayan language acquisition and spent part of his sabbatical in Guatemala and Mexico. He presented his research at the International Association for the Study of Child Language in Edinburgh, UK, the Linguistic Cycles workshop at Arizona State University, and the Linguistic Society of America in Chicago.
- Prof. Sara Rosen** continues to work on the functional categories in the Algonquian language Blackfoot. She has an article in press on the structure of the Blackfoot vP. The paper will appear in a volume in honor of Anita Mittwoch.
- Prof. Joan Sereno** continued her research on the L2 acquisition of stress. She published an article in *Language and Speech* and presented two papers at the annual meeting of the Acoustical Society of America in Miami.
- Prof. Harold Torrence's** research focused on the syntax and morpho-syntax of Wolof. He presented his research at several conferences, including the Berkeley Workshop on Affix Ordering, the ZAS Workshop on Clefts in Berlin, Germany, and the International Morphology Meeting in Vienna, Austria.
- Prof. Jie Zhang** received a three-year NSF grant for his project *Testing the productivity in Chinese tone sandhi*. He published articles in *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* and *Interfaces in Chinese Phonology* and presented his research at the annual meeting of the International Association of Chinese Linguistics, Beijing, China, the West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics in Los Angeles, and the International Congress of Linguists in Seoul, Korea.

The Linguistics Department would like to thank those who have contributed to the Francis Ingemann Linguistics Scholarship Fund and the Linguistics Department General Fund for the past year. Your support is greatly appreciated!



Graduations — Congratulations!

Bachelor of Arts

- ◆ Erik Christensen
 - ◆ Zachary Davidson
 - ◆ Katie Giessel
 - ◆ Matthew Khomsi
 - ◆ William Lipe
 - ◆ Adam Rydell
 - ◆ Iefan Thompson
 - ◆ Sonja Combest
 - ◆ Jennifer Garrison
 - ◆ Matthew Henderson
 - ◆ Christopher Huff
 - ◆ Katherine Porter
 - ◆ Alexander Straus
 - ◆ Tomomi Yaegashi
- ◆ **Erik Christensen** (Honors), “The Acquisition of Perfective and Imperfective Aspect: A Comparative Study of Arabic and Japanese Learners of English” (Advisor: Alison Gabriele)
- ◆ **Zachary Davidson** (Honors), “Orthographic influence in the acquisition of Quechua by native English speakers” (Advisor: Allard Jongman)
- ◆ **Christopher Huff** (Honors), “The Raising Effect of Aspirated Consonants on F₀ in Taiwanese” (Advisor: Joan Sereno)

Master of Arts

- ◆ **Sanae Akaba**, “An acoustic study of the Japanese short and long vowel distinction” (Advisor: Allard Jongman)
- ◆ **I Nyoman Aryawibawa**, “Semantic typology: semantics of locative relations in Rongga” (Advisor: Clifton Pye)
- ◆ **Michelle Bridges**, “Auxiliary verbs in Ughur” (Advisor: Sara Rosen)
- ◆ **Wendy Herd**, “Incomplete Neutralization of /t/ and /d/ in Flapping Environments: An Analysis of the North Midland Dialect of American English” (Advisor: Allard Jongman)
- ◆ **Daniel Kasperek**, “Improving the perception of foreign-accented speech through training: A comparison of word and sentence materials” (Advisor: Allard Jongman)
- ◆ **Yu Ju Lee**, “The role of lexical tone in spoken word recognition in Chinese” (Advisor: Joan Sereno)
- ◆ **Kasper Schirer**, “You heard the new theory?: A syntactic analysis of null subjects and null auxiliaries in English” (Advisor: Sara Rosen)
- ◆ **Yun Stockton**, “The effects of speaking rate on Mandarin tones” (Advisor: Joan Sereno)

Doctor of Philosophy

- ◆ **Saad Aldwayan**, “The acquisition and processing of wh-movement by Saudi learners of English” (Advisors: Alison Gabriele and Robert Fiorentino). Saad now is Assistant Professor of Linguistics at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- ◆ **Jongil Kwon**, “Topics in the syntax and semantics of Korean embedded clauses” (Advisors: Sara Rosen and Harold Torrence). Jongil now is Professor and Foreign Language Program Coordinator at Chungbuk National University in Cheongju, South Korea.
- ◆ **Yuwen Lai**, “Acoustic realization and perception of English lexical stress by Mandarin learners” (Advisor: Allard Jongman). Yuwen is currently a Postdoc at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.
- ◆ **Bradley Montgomery-Anderson**, “A reference grammar of Oklahoma Cherokee” (Advisor: Akira Yamamoto). Brad is currently an Assistant Professor at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, OK.

Department Updates

New Equipment

EyeTracker—With support from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the department recently acquired a head-mounted eye-tracker (EyeLink II) for psycholinguistic research. Housed in the Phonetics and Psycholinguistics Laboratory (KUPPL), the system consists of an eye-tracker connected to two PCs, one for stimulus presentation and the other for collection and analysis of responses. The eye-tracker allows for precise tracking of the subject's eye movements while they process speech or scan a picture. Last fall, Prof. Fiorentino and Prof. Sereno taught a seminar in Psycholinguistics in which students conducted an experiment with the eye-tracker to examine the processing of compound words in English.



Department Updates Continued

Lectures

Prof. Blumstein presents first Frances Ingemann Lecture

Sheila E. Blumstein, Albert D. Mead Professor of Cognitive & Linguistic Sciences at Brown University visited KU in the first week of May to deliver the inaugural Frances Ingemann Lecture. Prof. Blumstein presented her latest research in a talk entitled "Neural Systems Underlying Variability and Constancy in Speech and Lexical Processing: Evidence from Lesion and Neuroimaging Investigations". The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences established this lecture fund in 2007 in honor of Professor Frances Ingemann on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Linguistics Department.



2008—2009 GTAs

José Alemán-Bañón	Kelly Berkson
Daniel Kasperek	Sok-ju Kim
Stephanie Lux	Jeffrey Shouse
Khady Tamba	

**Linguistics would like to hear from its
students and alumni!
Please send us news about yourself to:
Linguistics@ku.edu**

Graduate Student News

José Alemán-Bañón co-authored a conference presentation (with Alison Gabriele and Junko Maekawa) "*Can we predict when dying will be difficult: Progressive achievements in L2 English*" at the 33rd Boston University Conference on Language Development. José was also awarded the 2008 Frances Ingemann award. This \$2,500 award is given annually to recognize an outstanding graduate student in Linguistics.

Wendy Herd obtained an NSF Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant for her project "The perceptual and production (re)training of allophones and phonemes in L2 Spanish". Wendy also presented two papers at the 156th meeting of the Acoustical Society of America in Miami: "*Tracking non-native acquisition of the Spanish tap-trill distinction: Cross-modal priming differences between native and non-native Spanish speakers*" (with Joan Sereno) and "*Perception of emphasis in Urban Jordanian Arabic*" (with Allard Jongman, Sonja Combest, and Mohammad Al-Masri)

Pedro Mateo presented a number of papers last year: *Nominalization in Q'anjob'al Maya* and *Documenting the Acquisition of Three Mayan Languages* presented at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He also co-authored several presentations including *Five Mayan Child Utterances: Acquisition of the Mayan Verbal Complex*, at the XIth Congress of the International Association for the Study of Child Language in Edinburgh, U.K. (with Clifton Pye, Bárbara Pfeiler, and Carlos Carreón) and *The Acquisition of Status Suffixes in Three Mayan Languages*, presented at the winter meeting of the Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas in Chicago (with Clifton Pye and Bárbara Pfeiler).

Jeffrey Shouse was awarded a Neurolinguistics Fellowship from the William Orr Dingwall Foundation. The fellowship supports Jeff for one year while he pursues his research on experience-dependent changes in brain activity related to visual word form processing.

Spring 2009 Colloquy Series

(All colloquies meet at 3:30pm in Blake 206)

- 2/2 Mabel Rice
Department of Speech-Language-Hearing:
Sciences and Disorders, KU
*SLI children's late acquisition of BE/DO CP
projections in questions: Evidence and
interpretations*
- 2/16 Erin O'Bryan Richtsmeier
Gerontology Center, KU
*Verb telicity affects on-line sentence
comprehension*
- 3/2 Sarah Ferguson
Department of Speech-Language-Hearing:
Sciences and Disorders, KU
*Acoustic correlates of reported clear speech
strategies*
- 3/23 Hiromi Morikawa
Department of Linguistics, KU
*Talking about wants, likes, and cans: Object
case marking with stative predicates in
Japanese*
- 4/6 Audra Sterling
Department of Psychology, KU
*Morphosyntax in children with Fragile X
Syndrome*
- 4/20 Yan Li
Department of East Asian Languages and
Cultures, KU
*An investigation of numerical NPs in subject
position in Mandarin Chinese*



Support Linguistics

Why support Linguistic studies at KU?

By giving to Linguistics, you contribute to the continued development of Linguistic academic activities, outreach, lectures, seminars and research programs at KU and throughout the region.

Your donations will also aid in supporting student scholarships, faculty research, teaching awards, service awards, and overall improvement of the department.

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Thank you for your support!



Department of Linguistics
427 Blake Hall
Phone: 785-864-3450
Fax: 785-864-5724
E-mail: linguistics@ku.edu
Website: <http://www.linguistics.ku.edu/>