The 37th International Seminar on Experiments and Surveys in Economics and Related Social Sciences

Date: 14:00-14:50 Tuesday, March 8, 2010

Speaker: Terry Joyce (Professor of psychology, School of Global Studies, Tama University

Venue: W9 Building, 6th floor, Room #626, Ookayama campus, Tokyo Institute of Technology

Title: Some priming studies relating to two-kanji compound words within the Japanese mental lexicon

Abstract: This talk will introduce a number of constituent-morpheme priming experiments specifically conducted to investigate the lexical retrieval and representation of two-kanji compound words within the Japanese mental lexicon from a morphological perspective. Much of the experimental data is consistent with the Japanese Lemma-unit Model (Joyce 1999; 2002, 2004) as a connectionist model of the Japanese mental lexicon. While much research has been devoted to the representation and processing of compounds in European languages (Libben & Jarema, 2006), relatively little attention has been paid to the rich compounding morphology of the Japanese language. Given the productivity of compounding as a word-formation process, the Japanese language is especially suitable for investigating the extent of morphological involvement in the organization of the mental lexicon. In this presentation, I briefly outline a series of constituent-morpheme priming experiments (Joyce, 1999; 2002; 2003a; 2003b; Joyce & Masuda, 2005, 2008, 2009). Essentially, these experiments have compared the patterns of facilitation within lexical decision task on responses to two-kanji compound words due to the prior presentation of a constituent kanji (relative to a baseline condition), across a number of word-formation conditions, such as modifier + modified, verb + complement, complement + verb, and synonymous pairs. Some of the earlier experiments (Joyce, 1999; 2002; 2003a; 2003b, 2004) indicated interesting differences in priming effects between verbal and nominal constituents, and that finding has generally been supported by more recent experiments using a series of very brief stimulus onset asynchronicity (SOA) conditions (Joyce & Masuda, 2005, 2008, 2009). Generally, these studies provide evidence that the patterns of constituent -morpheme priming vary across word-formation principles. Specifically, the results supplement previous studies suggesting that verbal constituents may be more effective in activating the family of compound words of which they are a constituent (Joyce, 2002), and particularly so for verbal constituents with high positional ratios (Joyce, 2003a; 2003b). The more recent studies also strengthen the evidence that the activation of morphological information can be observed at very brief SOAs. **Moderator: Noboru Hidano**