

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

The present number comprises articles based on empirical studies on information processing in discourse production or comprehension. The subjects of the presented studies are adults (aphasic patients in the first three articles) and children of different ages (in the remaining texts).

This issue opens with an article entitled *Macrostructure and inferential processing in discourse of aphasic patients*. The authors – Hanna K. Ulatowska, Sandra Bond Chapman, Julene Johnson and Carmen Branch (University of Texas at Dallas) – examined comprehension of narrative discourse in aphasic patients and normal controls. The article shows how these two groups of subjects perform inferencing tasks that require connecting explicit story content with generalized real world knowledge. The results highlight some communicative difficulties of aphasic patients in making inferences across different processing sources. The second article, *Discrepancies between objective and subjective measurements of discourse in aphasic and right-brain-damaged subjects* by Emilia Łojek (University of Warsaw), deals with script knowledge in discourse. The experimental tasks consist of retelling stories, describing daily life situations and providing a plan of action in a given situation. The article shows that two methods of discourse analysis – objective and subjective assessments of discourse content and order – are not fully compatible. Various possible reasons for these discrepancies are considered.

The title of the following article, by Krzysztof Jodzio and Wioletta Taraszkiewicz (University of Gdańsk), is *Short-term memory impairment: evidence from aphasia*. The authors examined short-term memory ability of aphasic subjects in relation to extent and type of brain damage. Patients with left hemisphere damage and aphasia, patients with left hemisphere damage without aphasia, and patients with right hemisphere dysfunction, performed auditory-verbal and visual memory tasks. The study suggests that aphasia may be accompanied by memory deficits that are not always simply a consequence of communicative difficulties.

The next three articles are based on papers delivered at an international conference on *Children's discourse from a narrative perspective. Action and consciousness in story construction* (Kazimierz Dolny, Poland, 17-21 September 1998). These articles supple-

ment papers published in two previous issues of *Psychology of Language and Communication* (1998 vol.2 no.2, 1999 vol.3 no.1).

The opening article of this part of the issue, entitled *The inner landscape of characters in stories told by children*, is by Maria Kielar-Turska (Jagiellonian University, Cracow). Polish children (ages 9 and 12) were presented with the beginnings of stories that differ in two ways: closeness and familiarity of main character, setting and events in contrast to the uncommonness of these three story elements. The task was to think up and write the next part of the story. It turned out that the type of story context is a more differentiating factor than age in children's stories with regard to originality and creation of a character's inner landscape.

In the next text, *Perception and evaluation in Lithuanian children's narratives*, Greta Lemanaitė Deprati (Jagiellonian University, Cracow) shows how young Lithuanian narrators (7- and 10-year-old children) express their evaluation of the events in the narrative discourse. The study is based on a particular scene of a picture-based narrative (the Frog Story). The author explores what causes the narrator to see and say what he/she would like to be true, rather than what is exactly shown in the pictorial material.

The author of the subsequent article on *Children's metalinguistic activity in the construction of linguistic existence*, Otilia Costa E Sousa (New University of Lisbon), examines the way Portuguese children construct entities of their stories. She analyzes the openings of stories in the corpus of European Portuguese language acquisition, and postulates that the mode of task presentation influences the success or lack of success in constructing linguistic existence.

The title of the final article in this issue is *The acquisition of spatial points of view as a cognitive prerequisite for the acquisition of deixis: Evidence from Russian children's speech perception and production*. The author, Galina Dobrova (State Pedagogical University of Russia, St. Petersburg), focuses on the cognitive prerequisites that precede children's perception and production of deictic elements. The text is based on an experimental study of Russian children aged 17-37 months. The Russian data were compared with these for English-speaking children.

Also included in this number is a book review by Hristo Kyuchukov and an announcement of a new international conference scheduled for November 2000 in Sofia, Bulgaria.

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