The University of Osaka
Institutional Knowledge Archive

Title	言葉に充ちた環境 : 生態学的言語理論のための5つの仮説
Author(s)	藤田, 隆博
Citation	文芸学研究. 2008, 12, p. 30-57
Version Type	
URL	https://hdl.handle.net/11094/50908
rights	
Note	

The University of Osaka Institutional Knowledge Archive : OUKA

https://ir.library.osaka-u.ac.jp/

The University of Osaka

The Wordful Environment:
Five Hypotheses towards an Ecological Linguistic Theory

FUJITA Takahiro

Contemporary linguistic theories (e. g. of F. de Saussure, of N. Chomsky) are generally mentalist and against the ecological psychology as regards their basic conceptions. This paper, thus, aiming to offer a step to construct a new linguistic theory, treats some problems of language relying upon James J. Gibson's ecological psychology theory.

First, I check up on some passages referring language in Gibson (1979) and Gibson (1982) to make clear what are the unasked potential questions about it. Such passages are found in three contexts: (a) social interaction, (b) controlling one's postures and (c) indirect apprehension.

The questions educed are: (1) [a]. What is the word that we predicate linguistic affordances of? (2) [a]. Why are those affordances real? (3) [b]. To what in the environment, when man speaks, is the orientation as posture of vocal tract? (4) [c]. How do words convey information of the environment? (5) [c]. In what respect is information in words of different kind than that in pictures?

Then, I discuss (chiefly, spoken) language answering the questions: The environment is scattered with audibly postured vocal tracts and which are what we call 'words' (or more generally 'linguistic unitis'). Thus, words are in real relationship not only with other words but also with every kind

of beings in the environment. According to Gibson, such relationship is directly perceived. Therefore, the environment itself, similar to a corpus the linguists use, is to extract grammar from.

My answers make a series of hypotheses: (1). Spoken words are posture of vocal tract. (2). The meaning of a linguistic unit is nothing but its relationship with other beings (including linguistic units) in the environment, which one can directly perceive. Thus, words have the affordance "one can listen and understand their meanings." (3). To speak words is to control one's own posture of vocal tract as orientation to the whole of the postures of vocal tracts which are scattered in the environment. (4). Each of a great many of beings in the environment has its name to call as its affordance. This is why words can convey information of the environment. (5). Information in words is of different kind than that in pictures in that the former presupposes a linguistically differentiated environment.