

2010 Activity Report

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1. Research themes

I have conducted research in the following four areas focusing primarily on the San (bushmen) living in southern Africa who are known as hunter-gatherers: (1) caregiver-child interactions, (2) The system of subsistence activity, demographic structure, and caregiver-child interactions; (3) the perception of the environment; (4) the transformation of ethnicity. In addition, integrating these aspects, I aim to clarify the cultural structure that organizes social interactions of the San people. The purpose of the current dispatch is to collect and analyze further data related to this research.

2. Dispatch details

(1) Dispatch to the United States of America, Belgium, etc. (February 21st to March 27th, 2010)

Between February 22nd and March 27th, 2010, I visited and conducted research at the UCLA Center for Language, Interaction, and Culture (CLIC) in the United States and the Institute of Human and Social Sciences at the University of Liège in Belgium.

At CLIC, I held the position of visiting scholar and was involved collaborative research on the theme “linguistic anthropological study of responsibility formation in early caregiver-child interactions.” Specifically, I regularly attended seminars held by the various professors who constitute the CLIC and presented my own research at one of these seminars. In addition, I availed myself of the abundant literature and other resources possessed by UCLA and also collected data related to caregiver-child interactions of families of Japanese descent in currently living in Los Angeles.



Photo 1 The UCLA library



Photo 2 Bruin Bear Statue

At the Institute of Human and Social Sciences in the University of Liège, I participated in an international symposium titled “Towards an anthropology of childhood and children,” which was held at the institute and delivered a presentation titled “Responsibility formation in early caregiver-child interactions among the !Xun of North-Central Namibia” and discussed potential research collaborations with scholars having a similar area of interest. Through my participation in this symposium, I was able to not only gain much valuable insight into my own work but also to get a better grasp on the cutting edge of “anthropology of children,” which, in recent years, has been gaining in popularity around the world.

3. Particularly noteworthy professional and personal experiences during my dispatch

Among its members, CLIC claims Dr. Emanuel A. Schegloff, the great authority on conversation analysis whose brilliance and name will undoubtedly be etched in the history of

sociology for time immemorial, Dr. Charles Goodwin who, receiving the influence of E. Goffman and G. Bateson, has undertaken his own communication research from the standpoint of ecology and the semiotic body, along with Dr. Elinor Ochs, Dr. Alessandro Duranti, and Dr. Marjorie H. Goodwin, who are leading scholars of modern linguistic anthropology and language socialization theory. In the realm of research in comprehensive communication, as its name implies, the center is truly a Center of Excellence. The long-term stay at CLIC this time was possible thanks to efforts by the reporter (Takada) to deepen scholarly exchange through previous tenure at CLIC as a visiting scholar and by inviting researchers affiliated with CLIC to visit Japan.

In addition to the professors and graduate students who reside at CLIC on more or less a permanent basis, the center is frequently visited by brilliant scholars (both senior and junior) from around the world, resulting in active and lively discussion on a daily basis. In addition, the fact that these scholars were constantly cultivating ideas, not only during discussions in class or at seminars but at every opportunity as they took meals, visited museums, and went hiking together left a particularly deep impression on me. I felt strongly that I would like to advance my own research activities as part of such a research network.

4. Achievement of research objectives and areas needing improvement

The 2010 dispatch began in mid-February, near the end of the academic year. A certain portion of the stay at CLIC in 2010 was spent engaged in tasks such as securing housing, making various other living arrangements, going through UCLA administrative processes to enable me to continue my research activities while holding a position CLIC as a visiting scholar in 2011. Thanks to the hospitality and extensive support extended by colleagues and friends, I was somehow able to get my research underway smoothly despite these extenuating circumstances.

5. Challenges and objectives for the 2011 dispatch

In 2011, I am planning to remain at CLIC as a visiting scholar and to advance collaborative research related to comprehensive communication. CLIC offers a wealth of human and scholarly resources, and even though my stay this time around is protracted, I do not believe that I will be able to take advantage of all that is offered during this period. It will be important to narrow the focus of my activities and deepen my inquiry so that my efforts relate directly to advancement of my own research in comprehensive communication.

In addition, in the latter half of the year, I am planning to participate in a collaborative field study and output workshop in Botswana. Starting with my graduate research, I have been

involved in research in Botswana over the past 15 years. In order for the collaborative field work and output workshop to be successful, it will be necessary to not only take advantage of previous research, but also to create a social network comprising local NGOs, governments, and local administrators of international agencies with whom I have not previously had much interaction.