



LLCd Symposium.
SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS.

Name: Claire Fletcher-Flinn

Affiliation: University of Otago, New Zealand

Brief Bio: Claire Fletcher-Flinn is an Associate Professor at the University of Otago College of Education, and a registered Educational Psychologist. Her research interests include the processes of learning to read, early literacy, and dyslexia. She has worked extensively on the Knowledge Sources theory of reading acquisition, which is unique insofar as it includes the teaching context, and the concept of lexicalised phonological recoding. She was the recipient of a Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Invitation Fellowship, and is currently extending the Knowledge Sources theory with research on hiragana, a non-alphabetic orthography.

and

Name: G. Brian Thompson

Affiliation: Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Theme: Language and literacy development in the alphasyllabaries

Title of Presentation: Initial learning of a formation principle for secondary phonemic elements of hiragana in Japanese children.

Abstract: In a lexical training experiment with limited exemplars requiring a secondary use of hiragana for representing phonemic elements, we provide evidence that 5-year-old Japanese children with very minimal literacy showed transfer, compared with phonological controls, to previously unknown and untrained words having hiragana representing different secondary phonemic elements. This early and rapid shift from their exclusive reading of hiragana syllabograms as representing syllabic elements to the dual use of some hiragana as representing phonemic elements appears counter-intuitive in the context of a syllabary. It is also contrary to standard theories that require knowledge of explicit letter-sound responses for learning the representation of phonemic elements in an orthography. However, these results support another theory that predicts the shift would be achievable from lexical input by the learner's implicit induction of a formation principle for this secondary use of hiragana. These results indicate a basic learning process compatible with those of alphabetic beginning readers, and demonstrate how that process contributes to an explanation of reading acquisition in different orthographies and languages.