



LLCd Symposium.
SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS.

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Brief Bio: Dr. Lalita Murty is a lecturer in the Norwegian Study Centre at the University of York, UK. Her post-doctoral research work at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in the Netherlands under the supervision of Prof. Anne Cutler, involved designing and running psycholinguistics experiments on spoken word recognition as part of the Phonological Learning and Speech Perception project funded by the Spinoza Award to Prof. Cutler. Her work examined the role of native phonological processes in the perception of non-native phonology, specifically those of Japanese and Telugu (Murty, Cutler and Otake, 2007). Currently she is working with Prof. Vasanta Duggirala, Osmania University, Hyderabad, in designing a study to examine the role of acoustic (vowel change) and rhythmic cues (vowel harmony) by learners of Telugu as a second language. In addition, she is also involved in studying the sociolinguistic factors affecting L2 accent perception and production in the BPO industry in India in an attempt to understand the relationship between accent production and perception and the various issues surrounding intelligibility and comprehensibility, specifically in terms of the attitudes towards native varieties of English.

Theme: Language Diversity and Cognitive Science

Title of Presentation: Telugu and and Japanese: a test case for the use of rhythmic similarities in speech segmentation

Abstract: A crucial stage in the process of listening is identifying word boundaries in the process of segmenting speech. Listeners use a number of cues in this process of speech segmentation, one such cue being the rhythmic patterns of one's native language. Traditionally languages have been classified in terms of whether they are stress-based (English, Dutch), syllable-based (French, Spanish) and mora-based (Japanese). Studies have shown that these rhythmic patterns are used in listening to both L1 and L2, thus speakers of English have been shown to use the stress patterns of their native language in listening to other languages, such as French (syllable-based). This paper reports a study conducted by Anne Cutler (MPI, Nijmegen), Lalita Murty and Takashi Otake (E-listening Lab, Japan) (2003) examining the use of the mora by speakers of Japanese and Telugu,

which though unrelated to Japanese is similar in terms of its crucial rhythmic properties. A fragment monitoring task designed in both Japanese (Otake et al. 1993) and in Telugu (Cutler, et al. 2003) was administered to Japanese and Telugu listeners respectively. The main findings show that both Japanese and Telugu listeners appear to be using very similar listening strategies despite the fact the results of the Telugu speakers listening to Telugu material were mixed unlike the Japanese listeners who used the same strategy in listening to both Telugu as well as their native language. With regard to listening to Japanese, both Telugu and Japanese responses to Japanese were remarkably similar which gives strong support to the rhythmic similarity hypothesis (Cutler et al.1992)