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Foreword

1993 marks the 25th annual meeting of the Stanford *CHILD LANGUAGE RESEARCH FORUM*. How was the Forum started? In 1967, Charles A. Ferguson, newly arrived at Stanford, suggested to colleagues in the Bay Area that they arrange an informal meeting to discuss their current research on first language acquisition. The first meeting was held on March 17, 1967, in the Forum Room of Meyer Library on the Stanford Campus. (Hence the name of the meeting.) During the summer of the next year, 1968, the study of children's language acquisition was formally encouraged by the Social Sciences Research Council which sponsored a set of workshops on "Language, society, and the child." They were organized and taught by Susan Ervin-Tripp, Charles A. Ferguson, John Gumperz, and Dan I. Slobin. The organizers offered two workshops on sociolinguistics (Ervin-Tripp, Gumperz), one on grammar (Slobin), and one on phonology (Ferguson). Overall, the general emphasis was on considering acquisition data from a variety of languages including Chinese, Finnish, Luo, Russian, Samoan, and Spanish, in addition to English. The following year, 1969, saw the resumption of Ferguson's initiative with the second Forum meeting, again focussed on informal presentations of ongoing research. Since then, the Forum has met every year, sponsored by the Stanford Department of Linguistics.

Although the Forum has grown in size over the years, its informal nature has remained an essential characteristic. From the start, students have played a central role in the meeting, in its organization, in the selection of abstracts, and in the presentation of research. Paper sessions have been supplemented by workshops on specific topics, by keynote speakers (beginning in 1974), by invited panels, and, in 1993, by a poster session. The keynote speakers alone illustrate the range of perspectives that have been represented at the Forum over the years. In order, they have been: Hermine Sinclair-de Zwart (University of Geneva), Dan I. Slobin (University of California, Berkeley), Lois Bloom (Columbia University), Susan Ervin-Tripp (University of California, Berkeley), Elizabeth Bates (University of California, San Diego), Courtney B. Cazden (Harvard University), Eve V. Clark (Stanford University), Melissa Bowerman (Max-Planck-Institute for Psycholinguistics), Ursula Bellugi (Salk Institute for Biological Studies), Annette Karmiloff-Smith (Cognitive Development Unit, Medical Research Council, London), Elissa Newport (University of Rochester), Shirley Brice Heath (Stanford University), Steven Pinker (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Jean Berko Gleason (Boston University), Lila R. Gleitman (University of

Pennsylvania), Elinor Ochs (University of California, Los Angeles), Peter Jusczyk (State University of New York, Buffalo), and Barbara Landau (University of California, Irvine). The keynote talks and the papers presented at the Forum have frequently anticipated new directions in research, and much of the work first presented here has gone on to appear in major journals, and has set much of the agenda for research in acquisition. The Forum has also provided a model for other conferences in the field, including the Boston University Conference on Child Language and the UCLA Conference on Second Language Acquisition, both now annual meetings.

At the 1993 meeting, held on April 16-18, at Stanford University, there were three invited Panels. They were organized by William Croft (CSLI, Stanford University/University of Michigan), on "What are the connections? Language acquisition and linguistic theory"; Paul Bloom (University of Arizona), on "Ontological categories and the learning of words", and Susan Ervin-Tripp (University of California, Berkeley), on "Acquiring syntax from discourse". We thank them and all their panel members for their stimulating contributions to the 25th meeting of the Forum. We also thank all the presenters of papers and posters for making the meeting a success.

The meeting itself could not have taken place without the 1993 Coordinating Committee. Jill Anderson, Jennifer Arnold, Miriam Butt, Daniel Dor, Carol Hicks, Lori van Houten, Melissa Iwai, Tracy King, Charles Lee, Jean Liittschwager, Christopher Manning, Norma Mendoza-Denton, Peter Sells, and Trisha Svaib all put in many hours to make the meeting a success. We are also indebted to the Dean of Humanities and Sciences at Stanford for help to support the 25th annual meeting. Finally, we would like to thank the tireless staff of Linguistics for all their help: Michelle Collette Murray, Gina Wein, and Kyle Wohlmüt.

The 1994 meeting of the Child Language Research Forum will be held on April 15-17, 1994. Further details are available from the CLRF Coordinators-1994, Department of Linguistics, Stanford University, Stanford CA 94305-2150.

Eve V. Clark

Editor

For the CLRF-93 Coordinating Committee