



Language Faculty Science

By Hajime Hoji

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This book explores how we can aspire to accumulate knowledge about the language faculty in line with Feynman's 'The test of all knowledge is experiment'. The two pillars of the proposed methodology for language faculty science are the internalist approach advocated by Chomsky and what Feynman calls the 'Guess-Compute-Compare' method. Taking the internalist approach, the book is concerned with the I-language of an individual speaker. Adopting the Guess-Compute-Compare method, it aims at deducing definite predictions and comparing them with experimental results. It offers a conceptual articulation of how we deduce definite predictions about the judgments of an individual speaker on the basis of universal and language-particular hypotheses and how we obtain experimental results precisely in accordance with such predictions. In pursuit of rigorous testability and reproducibility, the experimental demonstration in the book is supplemented by an accompanying website which provides the details of all the experiments discussed in the book.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Hajime Hoji's careful study is a welcome contribution to the growing discipline of experimental linguistics. He provides a very careful analysis of the methodological issues, illustrating successes and pitfalls, and outlining a general approach that should be valuable in carrying this promising enterprise forward."

Noam Chomsky, Institute Professor and Professor of Linguistics (Emeritus), Massachusetts Institute of Technology

"A truly remarkable achievement. With the experimental methodology rigorously worked out in Language Faculty Science, generative linguistics could indeed become a viable empirical science, rather than a philosophy of mind."

Naoki Fukui, Sophia University, Tokyo

About the Author

Hajime Hoji is Associate Professor of Linguistics and East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Southern California.

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