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Hozumi Tanaka—or Tanaka-*sensei* as he was fondly known to his colleagues and students in Japanese—passed away at the age of 67 in the early morning of 27 July 2009. He is survived by his wife Reiko and two sons.

Tanaka-*sensei's* primary contributions to natural language processing (NLP) are in parsing and semantic analysis. In parsing, he extended the GLR parsing algorithm to incorporate probabilities, multiple connection tables, and simultaneously carry out morphological and syntactic analysis for non-segmenting languages such as Japanese (Tanaka, Tokunaga, and Aizawa 1993; Inui et al. 1997; Shirai et al. 2000). His research on semantic analysis covered a broad spectrum, encompassing word sense disambiguation (Fujii et al. 1998), spoken language understanding for virtual agent systems (Shinyama, Tokunaga, and Tanaka 2000), lexical semantic approaches to query expansion in information retrieval (Mandala, Tokunaga, and Tanaka 2000), and metaphor processing (Iwayama, Tokunaga, and Tanaka 1990). He also carried out research on machine translation (Tanaka, Isahara, and Yasuhara 1983; Tanaka 1999b; Baldwin and Tanaka 2000), computer-assisted language learning (Bilac, Baldwin, and Tanaka 2002), speech recognition (Itou, Hayamizu, and Tanaka 1992; Li, Tanaka, and Tokunaga 1995), dialogue systems (Akiba and Tanaka 1994; Funakoshi, Tokunaga, and Tanaka 2002), and automatic music generation (Suzuki, Tokunaga, and Tanaka 1999). He was the author or editor of a number of popular introductory texts on NLP in Japanese (Tanaka 1989, 1999a).

Tanaka-*sensei* was the technical lead on the Japanese government-funded CICC Machine Translation Project (1987–1995) between East and South-East Asian languages

(Japanese, Chinese, Thai, Indonesian, and Malay). He also initiated a project on language resources for Asian languages which was funded by the Japanese Ministry of Education, and organized a number of workshops on the topic. The workshop series on Asian Language Resources, which had its seventh iteration at ACL-IJCNLP 2009, grew out of this. These initiatives laid the bedrock for the establishment of the Asian Federation of Natural Language Processing (AFNLP) in 2005.

Tanaka-*sensei* was a strong advocate of collaborative efforts to create and share language resources for NLP research. This commitment led to him founding GSK (an acronym for *Gengo Shigen Kyokai*, which literally translates as the “Language Resource Association”) in 2005, a non-profit organization intended to promote the development and distribution of speech and written language resources in Japan, with the ultimate goal of extending its reach throughout Asia.

Tanaka-*sensei* was born in Yamanashi, Japan, on 2 October 1941. He graduated from the Tokyo Institute of Technology in 1966 with a Masters degree in Control Engineering, and immediately commenced employment at the Electrotechnical Laboratory (ETL). He remained at ETL until 1983, working on topics including parsing, semantic analysis, machine translation, logic programming, and information extraction. He was actively involved in the planning and execution of the Fifth Generation Computer Systems project, an ambitious attempt by the Japanese government to develop next-generation “knowledge information processing systems” (Moto-oka 1983). Tanaka-*sensei* received his Ph.D. from the Tokyo Institute of Technology in 1981 (Tanaka 1981), and accepted an Associate Professorship at the Tokyo Institute of Technology in 1983. He became a full professor in 1986, and remained in that position until his retirement from the university in 2005. As is common in Japan, on retirement from the national university system, he took up a professorship at a private university, namely Chukyo University; he remained in this position until March 2009. During his combined time at the Tokyo Institute of Technology and Chukyo University, he supervised more than 200 students (including 27 Ph.D. students). From April 2009 he held a Research Professorship at the Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology.

Tanaka-*sensei* gave generously to the research community, most notably serving as the President of the Japanese Association for Natural Language Processing (1996–1998), President of the Asia–Pacific Association for Machine Translation (1996–1999), President of the International Association for Machine Translation (1997–1999), and President of the Japanese Society for Artificial Intelligence (2003–2005). He was also a member of the International Committee on Computational Linguistics, and a Fellow of the Japanese Association for Natural Language Processing and the Japanese Society for Artificial Intelligence.

In addition to his sharp intellect, Tanaka-*sensei* is fondly remembered for his caring nature, unflappable good humor, modesty, and all-round likeability. To his students and research associates, he was a true father figure who took a genuine interest in their personal and academic welfare. The “Tanaka Lab” was always a hive of research activity and intellectual stimulation, but at the same time a haven from the pressures of daily life in Tokyo and a safe house for the large numbers of foreign students who studied there. In a characteristically self-deprecating moment when asked what the secret to academic success was, Tanaka-*sensei* once remarked, “That’s easy — you get a job at a good university, which will attract good students, who will do good work; after enough years of that, you’ll start kidding yourself that it’s you who’s doing the work!”. He truly was a one-of-a-kind who is sorely missed by his former students, colleagues, and the Japanese NLP community to which he gave so much.

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