

The Keynote speech, August 6, 2010 9:00–10:15

The title: The co-creation of a story in discourse:

A *ba*-theory based approach as a step toward an ecological study

<http://www4.nida.ac.th/lc/iclc2010/index.htm>

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### **Abstract**

Some 2500 years ago, the Buddha mediated on the subject of co-existence amongst all creatures on the Earth. That humans must learn to co-exist with all living beings is something we all know.

Cartesian philosophies advanced by modern science have laid a mistaken foundation in contemporary society, leading us to believe that humans are superior to other animals. From Descartes’s ‘*cogito ergo sum*,’ the scientific approach has continuously strive to capture entities objectively. Through this, we have developed not only science and technology but also advanced political and social structures. This brought us prosperity, efficiency and material luxury in our contemporary lives.

However, recent research on DNA has rebutted this mistaken assumption of human beings’ superiority over other living things. We must now face the fact that the difference between the human beings and, for example, insects is not so big as we had once thought. In other words, the Buddha’s idea that all living things on Earth must co-exist harmoniously has been proved right.

In spite of our prosperity, there are still many problems in the contemporary world which we must face. Global warming and widespread starvation in many parts of the globe are just two of these problems. What steps can we take to address these problems?

I believe that first and foremost, a paradigm shift is necessary. While

Cartesian theories that emphasize separation and hierarchy are important, we must also consider non-reductional ways of thinking such as those as introduced by the theory of 'ba,' meaning field, an idea which originated in Japan. In this presentation, I will illustrate this theory through empirical research on discourse analysis, detailed in a micro analysis of natural discourse data focusing on how and why two conversationalists can co-create a coherent story.