

Language development in internationally-adopted children: A special case of very early second language learning

Prof Fred Genesee
(McGill University)

Tuesday 24th February, 12.00-13.30
Room 4.205 University Place, University of Manchester

ALL WELCOME

Abstract

Internationally-adopted children are a special case of very early second language acquisition – they discontinue acquisition of the birth language at adoption at which time they learn and use only the second language. They raise a number of important and interesting issues with respect to language learning and loss: “Is a very early acquired ‘second language’ acquired like a first or like a second language?”; “What are the underlying explanations for differences in early second language versus first language acquisition?”; “Is a first language completely lost when exposure to and use of that language terminates?”. In this talk, I will present longitudinal behavioural results of a 10-year longitudinal study of internationally-adopted children from China in comparison to matched monolingual control children indicating that they differ from monolinguals. I will also present data suggesting that gaps in their acquisition of their “second first language” is related to underlying lags in verbal memory. Finally, some recent fMRI data will be presented that reveal whether they actually entirely lose their birth language and whether the adopted language is processed in the same way as that of native-speaking monolinguals.

Directions

University Place is on Oxford Road, building 37 on the [Campus Map](#).

Further information

For further information about this seminar, please contact michaeline.k.glover@manchester.ac.uk
or about LuCiD, please contact helen.allwood@manchester.ac.uk