



Boosting Early Language as a Foundation for Literacy – Essential but neither Simple nor Easy

Thursday, 27 Oct. 2016, 5-6 p.m., Campus Belval, Maison du Savoir, Room 3.230

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Successful literacy development and educational attainment involves more than learning to decode words. In order to follow the curriculum and acquire new knowledge and skills, children must understand the language used by teachers as well as understand what they read. Oral language skills are therefore important for children's communication, literacy development, and school participation. The talk will focus on boosting oral language as a foundation for literacy and draw on different school-based work from relevant research projects in the UK (e.g. the Nuffield Early Language Intervention projects). The focus will be on supporting children in the Early Years (UK nursery and Reception) so they build a stronger oral language foundation for entering school. Different populations of pupils (monolingual children with language weaknesses as well as children learning English as an additional language (EAL)) will be considered. The talk will emphasize the importance as well as challenges of early interventions to provide children with a secure language foundation for school participation. Conclusions are drawn for the practice of supporting monolingual children with language weaknesses as well as children with EAL in preschool settings.

Silke Fricke is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Human Communication Sciences at the University of Sheffield. As a Speech and Language Therapist she specialised in children with speech, language, and literacy difficulties and her principal research interest lies in the link between language and literacy development (including assessments) in monolingual and multilingual children.

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