

Younger = better?

Comparing 5, 7 and 11 year olds learning French in the classroom

14th & 15th July 2011

Newcastle University

Keynote speaker: Carmen Muñoz, Universitat de Barcelona

Discussants: Dick Johnstone, University of Stirling

Emma Marsden, University of York

This conference is the culmination of a 2-year project funded by the ESRC on the role played by age in the early classroom learning of French. (Award number: RES-062-23-1545). The project has investigated linguistic development and attitudes in beginners aged 5, 7 and 11 following a similar curriculum taught by the same teacher.

The conference takes place over two days, one for education professionals and the other for researchers in the field of second language acquisition.

The first day (Thursday 14th July) targets MFL teachers, teacher trainers, policy makers and education professionals. A film produced by the research team will document the teaching style used during the project and will be followed by a presentation of findings on the linguistic development of the children, and on the role of literacy, attitudes and motivation in each year group (Years 1, 3 and 7). A round-table discussion will follow.

The second day (Friday 15th July) will focus on the project's research agenda, and will include an opening keynote speech by Carmen Muñoz, from the University of Barcelona on the current state of play in research on the role of age in second language acquisition. The research team will then present its research findings. Topics covered will include: linguistic development (e.g. vocabulary and syntax,) the role of gestures in language teaching and learning, attitudes and motivation, as well as the role of working memory and literacy. A discussion will be led by Emma Marsden (University of York) and Dick Johnstone (University of Stirling) on the implications of the research for early language learning in the classroom and with suggestions for future research.

Deadline for registration: 1st July, 2011

**\*\*Please register early as places are limited\*\***

To register for the conference and for further details, including the conference programme, visit the project website:

[www.flloc.soton.ac.uk/events.html](http://www.flloc.soton.ac.uk/events.html)

Or contact: [kevin.mcmanus@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:kevin.mcmanus@ncl.ac.uk) or [liz.o'sullivan@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:liz.o'sullivan@ncl.ac.uk)