CCD Developing Mind Series | Learning New Words Workshop

Thursday, 24 March 2016

Speaker Biographies

**Professor Anne Castles**  
*Department of Cognitive Science, Macquarie University*

Anne Castles is Distinguished Professor of Cognitive Science at Macquarie University, and Deputy Director and Leader of the Reading Program of the ARC Centre of Excellence in Cognition and its Disorders. Her research focuses on variability within the reading-impaired population, and in the causes of different types of dyslexia, including genetic, perceptual and language factors. She is also interested in the process of normal reading development and in particular in the mechanism by which word recognition skills are acquired by children learning to read. She is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia (FASSA) and serves on the Editorial Boards of several journals including Cortex, Cognitive Neuropsychology and the Journal of Experimental Child Psychology. She is also Chair of the Steering Committee of the NSW Centre for Effective Reading and a member of the Council of Learning Difficulties Australia.

**Professor Kate Nation**  
*Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford, UK*

Kate Nation is a Professor in Experimental Psychology and Fellow of St. John’s College. Her research is concerned with language processing, especially reading development. She is interested in how children learn to read words and comprehend text, and more generally, the relationship between spoken language and written language. A key aim at present is to specify some of the mechanisms involved in the transition from novice to expert. She also studies language processing in skilled adults, addressing the issue of how skilled behaviour emerges via language learning experience, and reading processes in people with developmental disorders that influence reading and language.
Professor Gareth Gaskell  
Department of Psychology, University of York, UK

Professor Gaskell read experimental psychology at Cambridge, and then studied for his PhD in psycholinguistics at Birkbeck College, London, UK. He continued on at Birkbeck as a postdoctoral researcher on language before joining the scientific staff at the MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit in Cambridge, UK. In 1999 he moved to the Department of Psychology at the University of York, UK. Gareth is a member of the Language Processing, Adult Cognition and Neuropsychology Research Groups.

Current research interests include speech perception, phonological processing, the mental lexicon, vocabulary acquisition, connectionist modeling, sleep and memory consolidation.

Professor Gaskell’s interest in sleep and language has led to the development of a sleep laboratory in the Department, which opened in July 2010. Here they can monitor sleep using polysomnography and correlate these recordings with behavioural changes in memory performance. A current interest relates to potential dissociations between sleep spindle activity and slow-wave activity in memory consolidation and integration.

Dr Anna Weighall  
School of Psychology, University of Leeds, UK

Dr Weighall gained a DPhil in Psychology from the University of York, UK, supervised by Professor Gerry Altmann within the Psycholinguistics Research Group. During her PhD she investigated children’s comprehension of complex spoken sentences (relative clauses) using the visual world eye-tracking paradigm. She worked as Lecturer in Psychology at Sheffield Hallam University, UK before joining the School of Psychology at the University of Leeds, UK in 2013. Dr Weighall is a member of the Language and Memory Lab, and the Health and Social Group.

Her research interests are broadly concerned with sleep, memory, language learning and development in children and adults.

Current projects investigate the role of sleep-associated memory consolidation in language learning; vocabulary acquisition in children learning more than one language; and the extent to which sleep may underpin cognitive development, and cognition across the lifespan. She has experience of a range of experimental techniques with both adults and children including the use of eye-tracking to assess language comprehension and EEG measurement (PSG) during sleep.