Lab Director elected Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences

Congratulations to lab director, Distinguished Professor Katherine Demuth, who was recently elected Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.

Katherine Demuth, a world leader in linguistic research, is passionate about the importance of theoretically driven empirical evidence for understanding both the structure of languages and how children learn them. This is evidenced in her groundbreaking psycholinguistic research on child language acquisition, and the implications this has for understanding language development in bilinguals, those with hearing loss, and those with specific language impairment/language delay.

Current Studies

Would you like to join in the fun?

We are currently recruiting for the following studies:

- **Toddler Grammar**: 30 month-old English monolingual children
- **Processing Speech Input**: 7-11 year-old English or Mandarin speakers
- **Music and Reading**: 9-11 year-old English native speakers

more studies will
Professor Demuth's professional values align strongly with those of the Academy, and she is honoured to be joining others as a newly elected Fellow.

be commencing in the new year!

Sign up online!

Macquarie linguistics prominent in language development research

One of the outstanding areas of research strength at Macquarie University is in the Department of Linguistics. Within the department, six of the faculty are devoted to research in child language acquisition. This represents one of the strongest and most visible language acquisition research groups in the world. This level of excellence can be measured in many ways – outstanding publication records, two Distinguished Professors (Crain and Demuth), and procurement of external research funds (Crain is Director of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Cognition and its Disorders, and Demuth is the recipient of an ARC Laureate Fellowship).

This year, a large contingent of 10 researchers from Macquarie University's Linguistics Department have been selected to present at the prestigious 40th
Boston University Conference on Language Development (BUCLD), November 13-15. This is one of the top international conferences in the world focusing on how children (and adults) learn language, and is extremely competitive (14% acceptance rate for papers, 33% with posters). This represents an outstanding achievement for both Macquarie University and for Australia, and it is a testament to the outstanding scholarship by members of the Department of Linguistics.

Comparing Mandarin bilinguals in Beijing vs Sydney

Earlier this quarter (June-July 2015) Dr Nan Xu Rattanasone travelled to Beijing Language and Culture University to conduct a study examining how children acquire Mandarin sounds.

Dr Xu Rattanasone has collected data from 78 children, aged 3-, 4- and 5-years-old, as part of a larger project examining typical and atypical bilingual language development in Mandarin-English-speaking children in Australia.

The data collected on this trip will provide a better understanding of

PhD submitted!
Congratulations Kiri Mealings!

Congratulations Kiri Mealings, who recently submitted her PhD thesis entitled "An investigation into how the acoustics of open plan and enclosed classrooms affects speech perception for Kindergarten children."

Kiri was supervised by Distinguished Professor Katherine Demuth, Dr Jörg Buchholz, Dept Linguistics Macquarie University, and Adjunct Professor Harvey Dillon, Director National Acoustics Laboratories (NAL).

Kiri has thoroughly enjoyed the past 5 years with the Child Language Lab. She will be starting an 8 month
what preschool-aged children in China know about the Mandarin sound system and how this might be similar or different to Mandarin bilingual children in Australia.

Recent Events

WISP 2015

The Workshop on Infant Speech Perception (WISP) held on 1st and 2nd September 2015 highlighted recent research on infants’ developing abilities to perceive and learn the phonological, morphological and prosodic systems of language. The workshop brought together researchers from the fields of linguistics, cognitive science, computational linguistics and developmental psychology to discuss novel techniques and paradigms that will shed light on the diverse roles of speech perception abilities at various stages of infant development, across languages and populations. Some of the issues raised included research on more diverse range of languages other than English and using a range

research position at NAL in November, working with Dr Sharon Cameron to investigate the role of neural oscillations in auditory resolution and speech perception.

...
of complementary measures to better account for infant performance. The workshop was sponsored by the Centre for Language Sciences (CLaS) at Macquarie University, and the Australian Research Council (ARC).

If you have a child who is affected by unilateral or bilateral hearing loss and would like more information about participating in studies, please contact ling.cll@mq.edu.au

Conference Reports

International Congress of Phonetic Sciences

Contribution by Qandeel Hussain

Recently I attended the International Congress of Phonetic Sciences, Glasgow, Scotland (10th-14th August). Other members of our Linguistics department also participated in this congress: Distinguished Professor Katherine Demuth, Associate Professor Felicity Cox, Dr Michael Proctor, Dr Ivan Yuen and Dr Elaine Schmidt.

The International Congress of Phonetic Sciences is one of the leading phonetics conferences,

Evoked Responses and Statistical Learning

Contribution by Pragati Mandikal-Vasuki

The 24th Biennial Symposium of International Evoked Response Audiometry Study Group (IERASG, May 10-15, Busan, South Korea) has morphed from the humble “Hal’s club” (named after Hallowell Davis- father of evoked potentials research) into a leading forum for discussion of cutting edge research in the field of auditory evoked potentials. I had the opportunity here to meet some of the pioneers in this field- Prof Richard Burkhard, Prof Manny Don, Prof Terrence Picton, Prof J. Hal-III.
organized once every four years. Phoneticians from all over the world present their research on diverse languages. The congress was a great opportunity for networking and collaboration. I met some of the well-known phoneticians, Ian Maddieson and John Ohala, who have contributed extensively on the development of phonetic sciences.

The International Congress of Phoneticians was a memorable event for me. I am really grateful to the Department of Linguistics, International Phonetic Association and the Australasian Speech Science and Technology Association for providing me funds.

The International Conference on Interdisciplinary Advances in Statistical Learning (25-27 June, San Sebastian, Spain) was the first of its kind primarily focusing on statistical learning. I met experts in this field and was the only representative from Australia at this conference. It was a fantastic networking opportunity.

My work received special mention in the scientific summary of both conferences. I am grateful to my supervisors- A/P Mridula Sharma, Dist Prof Katherine Demuth and A/P Joanne Arciuli for the encouragement. I also thank the Australia Awards Scholarships and Linguistics Department for conference funds.

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