**Information Form**

****School of Psychology and Clinical Language Sciences

Whiteknights

Reading

RG6 6AL

**Project Title: The development of language and cognition in deaf children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

**Investigators:** Emily Wright (Postgraduate student) e.s.wright@pgr.reading.ac.uk

Professor Ludovica Serratrice [l.serratrice@reading.ac](mailto:l.serratrice@reading.ac).uk

Professor Vesna Stojanovik v.stojanovik@reading.ac.uk

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are running a new project looking at how the development of language and cognition in deaf children who use two or three spoken languages (English plus another one or two spoken languages) compares to deaf children who use one spoken language and hearing children who use one or more than one language.

We would really appreciate your child taking part.

The project is being led by Emily Wright, a PhD student at the University of Reading. Professor Ludovica Serratrice and Professor Vesna Stojanovik are supervising the project.

The project has been approved by the University of Reading Research Ethics Committee, a committee that judges whether projects are ethical. Emily Wright will be the only investigator interacting with the children. Emily Wright has completed criminal records checks and has been approved to work with children. Emily Wright will also be the only investigator with access to the personal information. Professor Ludovica Serratrice and Professor Vesna Stojanovik will only ever have access to the anonymised data.

We are asking permission for your child to take part in this project. The project will take place between August 2020 and August 2021.

**What is the project about?**

The project is looking at the development of language and cognition in deaf children who speak English and another one or two spoken languages. Children who speak another spoken language in addition to English are said to have English as an Additional Language (EAL). We will compare their development to deaf children who speak one language and children who have typical hearing (who speak one or more than one language).

The newborn hearing screening program and improvements in hearing technology have greatly helped deaf children develop spoken language. However, there is very little research on how deaf children learn more than one spoken language.

Research also suggests that multilingual children have advantages in some cognitive skills such as Theory of Mind and Executive Function. Theory of Mind involves the ability to think about your own and other people’s emotions, desires and beliefs. Executive Function is a set of skills that help us learn new information and use this information later to solve everyday problems. These cognitive skills can be less well developed in deaf children, but we do not know if speaking more than one language can improve them.

More information about this project and our other project on parental decision-making for deaf children with EAL can be found at: <https://research.reading.ac.uk/celm/research/researchprojects-on-deaf-children-with-english-as-an-additional-language-eal/>

**Who can take part?**

We are looking for deaf children with the following characteristics:

* Lives in the UK
* Aged between 6 to 12 years old
* Speaks English plus one or two other spoken languages. The other language(s) must be spoken at home by at least one parent to the child.
* Bilateral deafness (conductive, sensorineural or mixed)
* Both parents/carers have typical hearing
* Main form of communication is spoken language (may use BSL as well)
* Has attended school in the UK for at least 2 school years
* No diagnosed developmental disorders or syndromes (e.g. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Down Syndrome).

**What does the project involve?**

If you give your consent, your child will participate in 3 online sessions. Each session will last approximately 30 minutes. Microsoft Teams will be used to conduct the video calls. You will need a computer/laptop with a web-camera to participate at home. You do not need a Microsoft Teams account and simple instructions will be provided on how to join the video call.

You are welcome to join your child and observe the sessions. We especially encourage you to join your child if you think they will need help using the technology. However, please do not help your child answer the tasks. Your child may take breaks during the sessions as required and if the tasks need to be spread over more sessions this can be arranged.

This project will take place between August 2020 and August 2021. The sessions can take place at the weekend or after school in the week. They can also take place during the week in the daytime in the holidays or if your child is not attending school (e.g. due to COVID-19 school closures or home schooling).

We anticipate that each session will be approximately 1-2 weeks apart, but we can be very flexible with arrangements.

If you agree to take part, you and your child will be asked to complete the following:

**Prior to Session 1:**

You will be asked to complete 3 online questionnaires:

*Questionnaire 1:* This questionnaire will collect information about your child’s hearing loss.

*Questionnaire 2:* This questionnaire will collect information about the languages your child speaks, when they use them and who with.

*Questionnaire 3:* This questionnaire will collect information about your child’s language development in their additional language(s) (language(s) other than English).

**Session 1:**

The purpose of this session is for you and your child to virtually meet Emily Wright, and to check that the technology is working (e.g. the sound).

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire that measures different aspects of your child’s Executive Function development.

Your child will be asked to complete 1 task.

*Task 1:* In this task your child will be asked to name pictures of different words that they see on the computer screen.

**Session 2:**

Your child will be asked to complete 2 tasks.

*Task 1:* In this task your child will be shown a series of pictures each with one missing square. Your child will be asked to choose the missing picture from 5 options.

*Task 2:* In this task your child will be shown a picture sequence and then asked to tell a story based on the pictures. Afterwards, your child will be asked 10 questions about the story.

**Session 3:**

Your child will be asked to complete 2 tasks.

*Task 1:* In this task your child will be shown a series of short stories. After each short story your child will be asked questions about the characters emotions, desires and beliefs.

*Task 2:* In this task your child will be asked to repeat sentences that they hear (the researcher will say these sentences facing the camera so that your child can lip-read if needed). This task is presented as a game where the child must help Teddy reach the treasure.

After your child has completed all 3 sessions, they will receive a £10 Amazon voucher to thank them for taking part.

**What happens to the information we collect from you and your child?**

Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of the research material. All data will be stored in password-protected files on a password-protected computer.

The data will be kept confidential and securely stored, with only an anonymous number identifying it. Information linking that number to your child’s name will be stored securely and separately from the data you provide us. Personal data will be destroyed when it is no longer required.

The anonymised research data collected from this project will be kept indefinitely and made available in anonymised form, so that they can be consulted and re-used by others. The data will be anonymised to prevent anyone from finding out the identity of the children who took part in the research project.

The anonymised data may also be used as part of published research and conference presentations.

No information about your child will be shared with their school. Taking part will not influence your child’s grades at school.

We are not able to share how an individual child performs on the tasks. However, we are very happy to share the overall results of the project.

**Where can I get more information?**

If you would like more information or would like to know the results of the project, you can contact Emily Wright by email on e.s.wright@pgr.reading.ac.uk or Professor Ludovica Serratrice at [l.serratrice@reading.ac.uk](mailto:l.serratrice@reading.ac.uk).

**What do I do next?**

We hope that you will agree to participate in the project.

Participation is completely up to you and your child. You can ask for your child to leave the project at any time by contacting Emily Wright by email at [e.s.wright@pgr.reading.ac.uk](mailto:e.s.wright@pgr.reading.ac.uk).

If you are happy for your child to take part in this project, please complete the online consent form using the link provided in your email. After you submit the completed consent form Emily Wright will be automatically alerted. Emily Wright will then contact you by email within 5 working days to send you the online questionnaires and to arrange a mutually convenient time for your first online session.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,





Emily Wright Professor Ludovica Serratrice