New study to pilot language and reading interventions for deaf and hearing children

March 21 2018, by George Wigmore

Credit: City University London

Researchers from City, University of London have been awarded £97k from the Nuffield Foundation to pilot a language and reading intervention with 120 children in their first year of formal education

Involving Dr. Ros Herman, Professor Penny Roy, Dr. Fiona Kyle from the School of Health Science's Division of Language and Communication Science, in collaboration with Professor Charles Hulme from Oxford University, the study – which is the first reading intervention study to include both deaf and hearing children—will trial the new intervention in primary schools for a year and compare outcomes with other schools that offer the standard literacy teaching.

The research team have shown in previous research that many severely

and profoundly deaf children have significant reading delays, yet are typically excluded from reading intervention research.

In this new study, teachers will be trained to deliver the intervention programme, comprising systematic phonics teaching alongside a structured vocabulary programme, during the school literacy hour. The study will investigate whether all children, or only specific groups of children, benefit from the integrated programme and whether a full scale evaluation is merited.

Dr. Herman said:

"Our previous research has revealed the scale of reading difficulties among deaf children. Our findings suggest that deaf children will benefit from specialist literacy interventions such as those currently offered to hearing children with dyslexia. In addition, deaf children and many hearing children require ongoing support to develop the language skills that underlie literacy.

"As a result we hope our new study, which will pilot a combined language and reading intervention, will address these issues so that teachers can provide the vital support needed to prevent both hearing and deaf children from unnecessarily falling behind their peers."

Provided by City University London

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