Phonological development and disorders of Chinese-speaking children: A cross-linguistic and multilingual perspective.

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Abstract: Cross-linguistic and multilingual studies on language development and disorders have the unique capacity to appraise claims about

- universal patterns of language acquisition;
- the role of language-specific features in language acquisition;
- the impact of input on language acquisition (especially in the case of multilingual studies);
- robustness of linguistic properties of language acquisition.

In other words, they are able to help us to evaluate and challenge theoretical models of language acquisition.

This talk will give an overview of phonological development and disorders of Chinese-speaking children, from a cross-linguistic and multilingual perspective. Research evidence from groups of children who are usually studied separately will be examined and integrated. The groups include both normally developing Chinese-speaking children and children in atypically developing conditions (i.e. with phonological disorders or hearing impairment); both monolingual Chinese-speaking children and multilingual children acquiring Chinese together with other languages. A language-specific yet universal concept, i.e. phonological saliency, is proposed, which may account for unique features evident in the speech of Chinese-speaking children as well as patterns of phonological acquisition of children speaking other languages.