How specific is specific language impairment

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March 18, 2016 (Friday)  
19:30 – 20:45  
T5, Meng Wah Complex, HKU  
Chair: Dr Anita Wong

Abstract
The Surrey Communication and Language in Education Study (SCALES) is the first population study of language development and language impairment (LI) at school entry in the UK. This four-year longitudinal study will trace the development of children’s language from Reception to Year 3. Our primary aim is to investigate the associations between language impairment at school entry and other developmental attainments (e.g. behaviour, attention, social skill) and how these relationships change over time.

In 2012 the SCALES screen was completed for 7,267 children in mainstream reception classrooms across more than 160 schools within Surrey. The screen comprised a short form of the Children’s Communication Checklist-2 (CCC-S), the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and the new Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP), a measure of academic attainment in the first year of school. In addition, we asked questions regarding the child’s home language, special educational needs status, teacher concerns and existing diagnoses. In this talk, I will explore the relationships between language, behaviour and education attainment in our screened sample and the outcome of detailed assessments of language, cognition and behaviour undertaken on 590 of the children in Year 1. Specifically I will consider the impact of relaxing non-verbal IQ criteria for language disorder on the prevalence and clinical presentation of those with unexplained language impairments.

About the speaker
Courtenay Norbury holds a Chair (Professor) of Developmental Disorders of Language and Communication in Psychology and Language Sciences, University College London. She is the Director of the Literacy, Language and Communication (LiLaC) Lab and is a qualified speech-language therapist. She is currently one of the joint editors of the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry. Professor Norbury’s research focuses on developmental language impairments in a range of neurodevelopmental disorders including autism spectrum disorders and reading disorders. She is currently leading a population study of risk for specific language impairment at school entry, with a particular focus on identifying common co-morbidities in a population cohort. She is also interested in language profiles that cross diagnostic boundaries and has published extensively on social communication disorders and their relations with autism and specific language impairment.

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