

LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

An increasing number of university students pursue education in English as a foreign language. An implicit assumption is that their English is good enough, or would improve sufficiently over the course of their studies, to allow them to fulfil their academic potential. Yet, research conducted in the UK suggests that international students perform notably less well on average than home students (Morrison et al, 2005).

In this talk I present my recent research on how language abilities and literacy skills of newly-arrived students develop over the course of a year and how they impact on their end-of-year academic results. I consider challenges of pursuing an academic degree in a foreign language, and how psycholinguistic research can inform university policies and strategies to ensure that educational experience and outcomes of international students are not compromised.

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I am an associate professor in second language education at the University of York. My work centres on understanding how people comprehend, speak and learn new languages. I conduct experimental and correlational research, combining motivations and methods from the fields of linguistics, psychology and education. Ultimately, I'm interested in how we can promote language learning through school and beyond. I currently serve as president of the European Second Language Association.

My research straddles two areas of psycholinguistics:

- Language, memory and cognition, with particular reference to mechanisms that underpin second language learning and use
- Language, literacy and academic attainment, with particular reference to international students in higher education

More info here: <https://www.york.ac.uk/education/our-staff/academic/danijela-trenkic/>