



Language acquisition and loss in the context of international adoption

Jogilė Ramonaitė (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania)

Language acquisition of internationally adopted children is worth particular interest of psycholinguists as not only the second language is learned quickly but the first language is very often forgotten or refused. The paper will analyze the linguistic development of Lithuanian children adopted to Italy. The children already have attended primary school in Lithuania and have a regular knowledge of Lithuanian. Therefore learning Italian corresponds to second language acquisition. Nevertheless in the case of international adoption the motivation for learning the second language is stimulated not only by need to communicate with adoptive parents or participate in classmate games but also the understanding of the beginning of a new life and the will to forget the often negative experience before adoption. The paper is based on preliminary data gathered observing and recording the adoptive children while living with their adoptive parents still in Lithuania and shortly after arriving in Italy.

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