

## Mini-EdPsych Q & A – Dr. Panayiota Kendeou

### Learning From Texts:

*You think you understand? Read again!*

May 29, 2008

**Are people who are learning a second language able to gain the same level of understanding when reading in their second language as in their mother tongue?**

Yes, this is possible but it depends on the readers' proficiency level as well as the difficulty level of the written material.

**With schools no longer using phonics, has this led to more problems in learning to read?**

We surely need a research study to investigate whether this is indeed the case. What we know, though, is that phonics can be effective means of acquiring reading skills. Also, no single method for teaching reading is effective on its own. Curriculums that combine phonics with comprehension skill development can be quite effective.

**Can a person who multi-tasks such as watching TV and reading be successful at either task?**

Multitasking is possible, especially if one or more of the tasks is automatic, and hence does not require much of our cognitive resources. In the example above, if reading is effortful and difficult it is very likely that another concurrent task like watching television will have a negative effect. However, it also depends on whether we really multitask. For instance, reading while the television is on is not necessarily multitasking. It could be the case that we are focusing on reading and the television is simply a background noise that does not bother us.