

Prof. Dr. Sho Tsuji

Researcher
CNRS
Ecole Normale Supérieure
Laboratoire de Sciences Cognitives et Psycholinguistique (LSCP)
Affiliated Faculty
The University of Tokyo International Research Center for
Neurointelligence (IRCN)



How and Why are Human Infants so Good at Learning their Native Language(s)?

Abstract

Language acquisition in infants is a remarkable phenomenon that occurs swiftly and efficiently across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. This process holds significant implications for understanding human learning and brain development, as well as for developing early intervention strategies. Central to infant language acquisition is social interaction, which shapes infants' linguistic experiences and cognitive development from early stages. What kind of cues do infants pick up from their social environment, and how do infants actively shape their own learning process through interaction?

In this talk, I will present results from an interdisciplinary approach merging cross-linguistic research, developmental psychology, and computational perspectives, and elucidating what we know about the pathways and mechanisms that sustain infants' learning from their socio-communicative environment. I will also touch upon ways we transform insights gained from research into practice.

CV

After undergraduate studies in Psychology at Humboldt University in Berlin, Tsuji became fascinated with infant language development during a research stint in the Laboratory for Language Development at the RIKEN Brain Science Institute. She earned a Ph.D. from the International Max Planck Research School for Language Sciences at Radboud University and the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, followed by postdoctoral research at the Infant Language Center at the University of Pennsylvania and Laboratory of Cognitive Sciences and Psycholinguistics at Ecole Normale Supérieure. During five years as a Principal Investigator at The University of Tokyo International Research Center for Neurointelligence (IRCN), she founded and directed the IRCN babylab, which studies language acquisition from an interdisciplinary perspective. In February 2024, she has taken on a CNRS post at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris, France.