Phonological challenges in Children With Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) Across Slavic Languages

Elizaveta Ivanova, University of Surrey, UK Anastasia Sukmanova, HSE University, National Research University, Russia Marina Norkina, Sirius University of Science and Technology, Russia Alisa Kosikova, Saint Petersburg State University, Russia

Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) causes significant challenges in expressive and/or receptive language and affects around 7% of the population (Bishop, 2017). While many studies have investigated various aspects of DLD, most of them focused on English-speaking regions, leaving many other regions underrepresented in the DLD framework. Meanwhile, the inclusion of diverse language groups is crucial for understanding the overall homogeneity of DLD, discussing standardized diagnostic tools and potentially developing better interventions. Here we present our systematic review of DLD in the Slavic language group that included all original studies in English and Russian databases (PROSPERO ID - CRD42021235107). While we have been looking at several linguistic processing and comprehension skills (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics), for this conference, we highlight the results specific to phonological processing.

Our final sample includes 8 phonological studies of Russian (4), Slovak (1), Serbian (2), and Czech (1) languages, covering a range of children from 3 to 14 years old. Across these studies, common issues include misarticulated/omitted sounds, diphthong simplification, and deficiencies in phonological memory, strongly associated with rhyme, phonemic awareness, and grapheme recognition. Overall, deficits in phonology across Slavic languages tend to co-occur together with other difficulties (e.g. grammar and semantics), may result from deficits in motor development or correlate with other processes (such as reading). Therefore, the phonological deficits in Slavic children with DLD should be viewed as one of the facets of the heterogeneous multifaceted DLD.