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# JANET WERKER

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CV

PARTICIPANT AT:

## BRAIN HEALTH. FROM GENES TO BEHAVIOUR, IMPROVING OUR LIVES

**October, 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Barcelona**

**Janet Werker**, Professor and Canada Research Chair in the Department of Psychology at the University of British Columbia, Director of the Infant Studies Center, and a Senior Scientist in UBC's Centre for Brain Health, Vancouver, Canada

Janet F. Werker is Professor and Canada Research Chair in the Department of Psychology at the University of British Columbia, Director of the Infant Studies Center, and a Senior Scientist in UBC's Centre for Brain Health. Werker's research explores the perceptual foundations of, and experiential influences on, language acquisition in both monolingual and bilingual learning infants. Her over 150 papers and chapters using both behavioral and neuroimaging techniques, have appeared in prestigious journals including Science, Nature, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, and the Journal of Neuroscience, as well as in the premier field specific journals. She is a Fellow of the Canadian Institutes for Advanced Research, the Royal Society of Canada, the Canadian Psychological Association, The American Psychological Society, the Cognitive Science Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

B-DEBATE IS AN INITIATIVE OF:



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ABSTRACT

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### **Perceptual Foundations of Language Acquisition**

The process of language acquisition begins in perceptual development long before infants produce or even understand, their first words. In this talk, I will review the rapid changes in auditory, visual, and multimodal speech perception that occur in the first months of life as infants establish a foundation for language acquisition. I will then present evidence that, while under typical circumstances the timing of perceptual attunement seems to be constrained by maturation, there are identifiable variations in experiences that can accelerate, slow down, or modify this developmental trajectory. Finally, I will introduce new questions about whether or studies to date on the timing of plasticity have considered all the relevant input systems. The implications of these findings for better understanding language development in both typically developing and atypical populations will be considered.

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