

## OPEN SEMINAR SERIES

**Thursday 25 February 2010**  
**15:00 – 16:00**

**SEERC Conference Room**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Strategakis Bldg**

**“Culture, interaction and the development of social  
and executive skills”**

**By**  
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### **ABSTRACT**

Over the past twenty years much research has attempted to uncover the relationship between children’s grasp of mental states as a driving force of social interactions, under the banner ‘theory of mind’, and the development of cognitive processes that monitor and control lower level processes, known as ‘executive functions’. Most accounts of both skills assume that, first, their development occurs relatively independently of social processes and, secondly, executive skills promote the emergence of social understanding. This talk will question these views. It will draw upon our work with preschoolers showing different patterns in north-east Asia (Lewis, Koyasu, Oh, Ogawa & Short, 2009; Oh & Lewis, 2008), performing tasks in which there is a social component, in research designed to examine the dynamics of task performance (Towse, Lewis & Knowles, 2008). I will argue that we need a more integrated framework of these skills, in which the two processes, ‘theory of mind’ and ‘executive function’, should not be depicted as internal predispositions, but are dynamic social skills. My analysis draws upon a long tradition of theory within developmental psychology.

**The seminar series is open to all members of *staff and students* of CITY and to any *externals* that wish to attend.**