

F22.029: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Vocabulary Instruction for Emergent Bilingual Children

Faculty mentor: Na Young Kong

Overview

The purpose of the projects is (a) to design culturally and linguistically responsive vocabulary instruction for emergent bilingual preschool children and (b) explore immigrant or bilingual families' perspectives on supporting and engaging in their children's education at schools. In the United States, the number of dual language learners has rapidly been increasing. Of three- and four- years old children, 23 percent are dual language learners in state-funded preschool programs (National Institute for Early Education Research [NIEER], 2018). Emergent bilingual children (EBC)'s early vocabulary development in dual languages plays a critical role in their later reading comprehension and academic achievement. Research documents that vocabulary knowledge in both first and second languages is strong predictor of later English reading comprehension (Grimm et al., 2018; Lee, 2011). Despite the importance of vocabulary knowledge in both languages, many educators do not feel competent in providing appropriate instruction to EBC. Undergraduate students who are interested in the projects are welcomed. There will be an opportunity to contribute to developing educational materials for teachers while working with a faculty in the program of early childhood education/early childhood special education.

What the student will DO and LEARN

Under the faculty's supervision, the student will have opportunities to (a) review the professional literature related to culturally and linguistically responsive practices, (b) summarize the findings, (c) identify and review a variety of young children's storybooks, (d) develop a list of academic vocabulary words to teach emergent bilingual children, and (d) create a child-friendly definitions of each word in more than one language (e.g., English, Spanish). The student may have additional opportunity to interview immigrant or bilingual families of young children including children with disabilities. Throughout the work, students will learn about the professional literature on what culturally and linguistically responsive practices are and the approach to identify academic vocabulary words of high utility for young emergent children. Students may increase their cultural and linguistic responsiveness while working on the topic.

Additional benefits

A student may have an opportunity to present a part of work to a local, state, or international conference with a faculty. No travel fee is not available, though.

Additional qualifications

A student speaks English and another language (Spanish or Navajo). A student who speaks Spanish or Navajo as their primary language and has experience of working with young children is preferred.

Time commitment

6 hrs/week for 30 weeks