

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 17, 2013 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

SESSION 2C

EDUCATION AND SOCIETAL INEQUALITIES

Session Moderator: Judith A Howard, Sociology
228 MGH

3:45 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Examining Bilingual Education Policy in Washington State

Amy Ela (Amy) Smith, Senior, Linguistics

Mentor: Manka Varghese, Education, The University of Washington

Despite increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in the United States, our public schools struggle to best serve students whose first language is not English. There is a disconnect between what educational research identifies as best practices for English learners and what gets implemented in our schools. In order to modify policy to meet the needs of these students, we need to first fully understand the policies that already exist; therefore, this research seeks to create a fuller picture of the state of bilingual education policy in Washington state. As Bernard Spolsky argues, language policy consists of three key parts: explicit language planning in the form of laws or school curricula, actual linguistic practices, and language beliefs & ideologies. I focus on the third - beliefs about bilingual education and the use of non-English languages in public schools - by surveying newspaper coverage of bilingual education in Washington state. Newspapers were chosen as a method for examining popular attitudes because they play a dual role in informing both the policy-making elites and the general public, two groups that rarely ever come in direct contact with bilingual education. Because of this, newspapers have a unique function in informing the public's opinion on matters they would otherwise not encounter. This presentation will focus specifically on preliminary results based on coverage of bilingual education in the Seattle Times, one of Washington state's major newspapers. Using discourse analysis methods, I will look at stylistic and rhetorical choices made by the paper to undermine the need for quality programming for bilingual students and to marginalize the voices of those who are most impacted by these programs - bilingual students and their families.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons West, Easel 15

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Exploring an Urban Preschool's Implementation of the Project Approach: A Method of Promoting Pro-Social Behavior through Eliciting Student Engagement and Motivation

*Ashley D Johnson, Senior, Early Childhood & Family Studies
McNair Scholar*

Mentor: Nancy Hertzog, Learning Sciences and Human Development

Behavioral struggles during the preschool years are meaningful predictors of continued behavioral problems. Educational research suggest that student motivation shares a positive relationship with pro-social behavior. Students who exhibit behavioral challenges during the preschool years may be less motivated and angrier than other students. In contrast, highly motivated students tend to be enthusiastic, and involved in classroom based activities. Student motivation can be elicited by teachers' promotion of student autonomy, and ensuring systematic teaching is accompanied with opportunities for students to apply what they are learning to real-world experiences. This powerful learning occurs when: students learn about what is personally meaningful to them, there is a community of inquiry present in the classroom, and presence of a positive emotional climate. The Project Approach provides students with the opportunity to design and complete in-depth studies of real-world problems. Project work can be completed in small groups or in class settings. The social nature of this method of learning can result in students who are engaged in classroom content, and subsequently are more motivated to learn and participate. This research employs an observational study design, in which two different preschools' experiences with implementing the project approach were documented. These observational notes focus on students' engagement with project based work versus traditional classroom work, and their motivation to engage in such work. This study predicts that there will be increase in student engagement and motivation following the implementation of project-based learning. This research hopes to identify the relationship student engagement and motivation shares with student's participation in classroom activities. It is the study's hope that this research will evoke discussion on the development preschool classroom practices, that engage

students while setting the foundation for future positive academic outcomes.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons West, Easel 24

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Perceptions and Interventions: Science for Middle School Girls of Color

Vanessa Ngoc (Vanessa) Pham, Senior, Early Childhood & Family Studies

Zesbaugh Scholar

Mentor: Deana Scipio, Learning Sciences and Human Development

Mentor: Mary Clevenger-Bright, Early Childhood & Family Studies

Throughout their lives, children in the United States public education system are bombarded with messages of equality and the promise of the American dream (i.e., no matter who you are, you can succeed through merit and hard work). Yet, the field of science is still dominated by White men in both number and power. Young girls of color are thus faced with two conflicting narratives: "You can achieve anything you set your mind to," and, "There are few people like you in the field of science." My research asks how middle school girls of color process this dichotomy. Based on my past experience as a female minority pursuing a career in science, it is my hypothesis that these girls will consciously believe and express the first narrative, while internalizing and acting according to the latter. One of my research methods is the *Draw-a-Scientist Test*, a tool used to gauge a student's perceptions of scientists by asking her to make a drawing of one. I expect the girls to express their belief that anyone can become a scientist, while drawing stereotypical images of scientists (i.e., people unlike themselves). I will also analyze and look for themes in observations, recorded interviews, and interactions of girls participating in an after-school program called *Chemical Oceanography After School Time (COAST)*. I believe that as the girls gain firsthand experience with science in the *COAST* program, they will begin to interact in ways that show growing confidence in their own potential to become scientists. These findings indicate a need for more science intervention programs, like *COAST*, for girls of color. My research aims to open up dialogue about how the prevailing ideologies and realities of race and gender in the United States impact the potential in science for girls of color.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons West, Easel 23

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

The Current State of Inclusive Education

Kseniya Nikolaevna (Kseniya) Pechenkina, Senior, Early Childhood & Family Studies

Mentor: Elizabeth West, Area of Special Education

Mentor: Mary Clevenger-Bright, Early Childhood & Family Studies

Over the past two decades, inclusion has become a major topic in the field of education. Inclusion means that children with special needs attend school with typically developing peers. Public schools have undergone significant reconstruction in order to fulfill the vision of inclusive classrooms. Much is known and various research studies exist about the benefit of inclusion for children with disabilities, as well as for typically developing children. Yet, what is the current status of inclusion? My research examines inclusion on a bigger scale and seeks to answer questions such as "what does a successful inclusion program look like?", "what teaching strategies are important for inclusive classrooms?", and "how do schools promote inclusive practices?". As a mixed-methods study, I am conducting a review of research and other artifacts as well as performing semi-structured interviews of teachers who practice inclusive education. The artifacts I review, such as a research study examining principals' perspectives on inclusive education, provide different definitions and applications of inclusion. Other research studies look to see if inclusive classrooms are reaching the goals set by the concept of inclusion, such as membership, relationships, and development. Finally, I interview preschool and grade-level teachers at an elementary school in the Seattle Public School District. The teachers' experience varies from teaching inclusive classrooms, resource rooms, and general education classrooms; but all have taught in inclusive settings. My aim is to generate a perspective of the current state of inclusion and use teacher voice to capture experiences.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons West, Easel 25

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Elementary School Teachers' Qualification and Salary in U.S., Finland, and South Korea: A Comparative Analysis

Lois H (Hyosun) Taylor, Senior, Early Childhood & Family Studies

Mentor: Marge Plecki, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

South Korea is my home country, and I benefited greatly by getting my K-12 education there and from receiving my higher education in the United States. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children, "a key component of quality program is the quality of teacher (NAEYC, 2012. p. 2)." As a student who is dreaming of being a professional in the U.S. education field, I am interested in how policy makers, teachers, and professionals can

improve k-12 education. This study analyzes teachers in elementary education systems in the U.S., South Korea, and Finland. I chose Finland as a third case study since it has one of the top k-12 education systems in the world. In particular, this study looks at teachers' salaries, education requirement, workload, and professional status. I will compare teachers' salaries through government website and journal articles. For example, in South Korea, people who want to be elementary school teachers must go to specialized four-year colleges that are just as competitive as law or medical school and take teaching certificate exams after they graduate. Furthermore, teachers in South Korea are highly respected professionals. Finland also has a unique education system and has been successful in students' outcome and teachers' satisfaction as professionals. U.S. has a variety of teacher preparation and one of the most diverse populations in the world. This study can contribute towards current self-evaluating systems in the United States and keep moving forward to be a frontier in education.

all 20 books and graphed to illustrate progress. I hypothesize that the data will indicate that the children's vocabulary will improve using the dialogic reading methods. If Dialogic Reading is found to increase the students' vocabulary, it may lead to research on its effectiveness for older children with autism, and an expanse of its use among parents of children with autism.

POSTER SESSION 3

Commons West, Easel 29

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Dialogic Reading and Vocabulary Development in Preschoolers with ASD

Laurel Corinne (Laurel) Tallent, Junior, Linguistics

Mentor: Roxanne Hudson, College of Education

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are defined by communication and language development difficulties, so for children with ASD, developing vocabulary is difficult yet all the more important for developing communication. This project asks whether repeated exposure to vocabulary words through the dialogic reading method is effective in expanding vocabulary in preschool children (3-5 years old) with autism. The Preschool Autism Literacy Project collected the data for this project. The study consists of trained tutors who read with preschool children (N=23) with ASD 4 times a week using Dialogic Reading. In the dialogic reading method, the reader of the book asks the student pre-planned questions about the story and text, creating dialogue. The tutors read a book from a prepared set with the children every week for 20 weeks. For data on vocabulary development, tutors gave their students vocabulary tests before the 1st session and after the 4th session of each 4-session week. The tests consisted of 10 vocabulary words present in the book they were reading that week. For the testing material, each vocabulary word was represented on a sheet of paper with an image that matched the vocabulary word. The tutor asked the subjects to identify each image, each correct response earning the subject a score of 1 point, and each incorrect response earning the subject a score of 0. The scores from the 1st and 4th session tests were compared to calculate a gain score for each subject on