

Head Start Graduate Student Research Program: 1998 Research Scholars

Sandra Barruecco

Project Title:

A Longitudinal Analysis of the Linguistic and Academic Development of Latino Children: Effects of Early Childhood Education and Bilingual Education

Grantee:

Sandra Barruecco

Project Funding Years:

1998-2000

University Affiliation :

University of Denver
Department of Psychology

Project Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of Head Start participation on subsequent school experiences of Latino children with Limited English Proficiency using databases maintained by the Denver Public Schools. Specifically, the study focused on the linguistic, academic, and cognitive development of Latino English Language Learners (ELL). Latino students enrolled in any bilingual education program in Denver Public Schools from 1992 to 1997 were included in the study, including children from former Head Start and city or state early childhood education programs. The development of three groups of children were compared: (1) former Head Start graduates; (2) former graduates from city- or state-funded early childhood education programs; and (3) children who did not attend preschool. In addition, the development of children in the three groups was compared across two forms of bilingual education: Transitional Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language. Analyses included cross-sectional comparisons of group differences, taking into account type and length of preschool experience, parental social class, and ELL instructional modes.

Sample:

n=Latino pupils enrolled in bilingual education programs in Denver from 1992-1997

Measures:

Child

Review of School Records from 1992 through 1997

Language Assessment Scales (LAS) - Short Form, Oral, Level 1

Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)

Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices

Barbara Conboy

Project Title:

Cross-Linguistic Influences in Early Bilingual Development

Grantee:

Barbara Conboy

Project Funding Years:

1998-2000

University Affiliation :

Program in Language and Communicative Disorder

San Diego State University/University of California, San Diego

Project Abstract:

The main purpose of this study was to research typical language development in children learning two languages simultaneously. One goal of this study was to increase the current knowledge of typical language development in low-income bilingual children under age three. A second goal was to provide the Head Start community with information about bilingual development to ensure cutting edge language services to children raised in bilingual environments. This project involved a collaboration between San Diego State University, University of California (San Diego), and the Neighborhood House Association Head Start Program in San Diego.

This two-year research project consisted of three experiments that were conducted with Spanish-English bilingual children at 20 and 28 months of age. The ways in which growth in one language influences growth in the other language at the lexical (vocabulary) and morphosyntactic (grammatical) levels were investigated. The first experiment studied lexical processing using an electrophysiological approach. The second experiment compared vocabulary scores obtained at one time point with grammatical complexity scores obtained eight months later. The third experiment compared grammatical development in the two different languages at the same time point. Eligible children for these studies were contacted through the Southwest Area Head Start and Early Head Start programs run by the Neighborhood House Association.