

children. During the second year, the tool was used to determine the phonological sensitivity of 100 4- to 5-year-old Spanish-speaking Head Start children. These children were drawn from three selected Head Start centers in Miami-Dade County, Florida serving the Hispanic population. The tool was composed of tasks used by other researchers in English. The tasks included a rhyme-matching task, an alliteration-matching task, and a sentence-segmenting task. The children were assessed on these tasks in both English and Spanish. Additionally, the PRE-LAS 2000 was used to measure oral language proficiency in English and Spanish.

Analyses provided quantitative information of individual children's phonological awareness and language proficiency in two languages. A similar relationship was identified between oral language and phonological awareness in both languages, independently. However, the children's oral language skills were much better defined in Spanish. A cross language transfer of phonological awareness skills was also identified with phonological awareness skills in Spanish, along with English oral language skills, playing a major factor in the children's English phonological awareness abilities. Implications include the importance of assessing bilingual children in both languages, as well as the importance of strengthening the child's primary language and literacy skills prior to literacy instruction in the second language.

*Sample:*

n=50 low-income, Hispanic Head Start children, ages 3-5 (Year 1) from 2 centers

n=100 low-income, Hispanic Head Start children, ages 4-5 (Year 2) from 3 centers

*Measures:*

*Child*

Phonological Sensitivity Test (English and Spanish)

Pre-Las2000 (English and Spanish)

**Greta M. Massetti**

*Project Title:*

Assessment of Emergent Literacy in Head Start Preschool

*Grantee:*

Greta M. Massetti

*Project Funding Years:*

1999-2001

*University Affiliation :*  
SUNY Stony Brook

*Project Abstract:*

The purpose of this study was to develop an assessment and intervention tool to measure and target children's emergent literacy skills. This project evaluated the use of a dynamic assessment system that Head Start teachers used to assess individual preschoolers' emergent literacy skills. Twenty classroom teaching situations were constructed that allowed teachers to emphasize emergent literacy skills while assessing individual children's performance. The dynamic assessment was designed to give Head Start teachers an understanding of which of their students have mastery of the materials and which need more work in that particular area while exposing children to literacy materials. In this way, teachers could target areas in which students need the most growth and could tailor experiences to individual students' needs and abilities.

Three major domains of emergent literacy skills were targeted: print awareness, emergent writing, and linguistic awareness. The goals of this study were to: (1) develop a measure of individual children's emergent literacy skills that will be used by Head Start teachers to track children's literacy development; (2) implement the use of the measure in Head Start classrooms; and (3) validate the new measure using standardized assessment instruments.

Children enrolled in Head Start programs for two years in Suffolk County, NY participated in this project. During the first year of the study, the emergent literacy measure was developed and pilot tested. During the second year of the study, ten Head Start classrooms participated in the evaluation and validation of the Dynamic Assessment program. Classrooms were randomly assigned to assessment and control conditions (five in each group). Teachers in the assessment classrooms used the Dynamic Assessment program throughout the year. In order to validate the emergent literacy measure, 130 children from the 10 classrooms completed standardized assessment instruments measuring language and emergent literacy skills in the fall and spring of the second year. A Literacy Activities Checklist was also developed in order to assess teachers' use of literacy activities. Children's growth scores were analyzed in order to evaluate the extent to which project participation had an impact on teachers' use of emergent literacy activities in the classroom and on children's emergent literacy skills.

*Sample:*

n=130 children from low-income families in Suffolk County, NY

*Measures:*

*Child*

Developing Skills Checklist  
NCLD Get Ready To Read Screen  
Teacher  
Literacy Activities Checklist  
Teacher Background Survey

## **Christine M. McWayne**

*Project Title:*

Assessment of Emergent Literacy in Head Start Preschool

*Grantee:*

Christine M. McWayne

*Project Funding Years:*

1999-2001

*University Affiliation :*

SUNY Stony Brook

*Project Abstract:*

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