Facilitating Language & Literacy Outcomes for English Language Learners
CFDA 84.305 NCERR-ELL English Language Learners: Goal 2 Development

PROJECT ABSTRACT

The primary objective of BLOOM (Bridging for Language Outcomes in the Classroom) is to develop and refine an adaptive tiered vocabulary intervention that can be applied reliably and effectively for Spanish-speaking ELLs in KG-1st grade classrooms. The literature supports the use of bridging to the child's first language for vocabulary definitions of novel English words during reading tasks as a strategy to accelerate English word learning in young ELLs (Lugo-Neris, Jackson, Goldstein, 2010). In rural schools, however, Spanish speaking teachers are often under-represented in the teaching personnel. BLOOM will utilize Spanish bridging and intensified support within adaptive individualized e-book instruction, to serve as a catalyst of English word learning by providing rich comprehensible input. The web-based format of instructional delivery offers a promising venue to provide high treatment fidelity with access to Spanish bridging for novel English words in a multi-sensory, engaging format. BLOOM development and pilot testing will take place in low SES rural schools in Florida where 48% of children report Spanish as the primary language spoken in the home. The BLOOM project will utilize an established partnership with the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium which serves a large number of Spanish-speaking children learning English as a second language in Gadsden County Public Schools. These 20 minute interventions will take place within authentic learning environments and supplement the ongoing language and literacy instruction in the classroom by providing a systematic and explicit intervention grounded on comprehensible input.

Kindergarten and 1st grade students whose home language is Spanish will receive vocabulary instruction during recorded e-book reading experiences containing preview/review, repeated Spanish expansions, acoustic highlighting, and phonemic bootstrapping. A systematic process will be used to collect observations and vocabulary data that will provide feedback for refining the intervention in progressive prototypes to ensure that BLOOM is feasible for implementation and responsive to the needs of diverse learners with varying English proficiency levels. Three aspects of vocabulary knowledge will serve as benchmarks pre and post each weekly unit, refine and examine short term learner outcomes including: receptive vocabulary, expressive labeling (in English), and conceptual word definitions. Additional standardized measures of language and reading achievement will be administered to observe how varying components of the intervention affects ELLS who differ in their L1 and L2 skill level. The feasibility of implementation will be evaluated through observation and teacher feedback from interviews and focus groups. Benchmark and progress monitoring data will be also utilized to identify potential mediators across groups of ELLs who differ in their linguistic skills. The promise of the BLOOM intervention for enhancing vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension will be assessed by examining the outcomes of participants following successive iterations of the BLOOM intervention.