APD 1210 RESEARCH PRACTICUM COURSE

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS 2024-2025

FALL/WINTER

Name and Title: Becky Chen, Professor

Lab Website: http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/chenlab

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: Language and literacy Development of French immersion Children

NUMBER OF STUDENT PLACES AVAILABLE: One

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY:

Generally speaking, our lab investigates language and literacy development of bilingual and multilingual children. Currently our research participants are English-French bilingual children (children enrolled in French immersion programs).

We have conducted research involving children enrolling in French immersion programs in our lab for many years. There are three major research directions. The first direction concerns language and literacy development of bilingual and multilingual children in French immersion. We compare the performance of children who speak English as their first language (L1) and those who speak another language as the L1. The second direction is about cross-language transfer of language and literacy skills between English and French. We examine how English skills can transfer to French and support French literacy development, and how school instruction in French can in turn enhance English skills. The third direction focuses on early identification and early intervention for at-risk readers in French immersion. We look for effective screening measures that can identify at-risk status in French, the second language (L2) and design interventions that can improve children's reading performance. We have worked with several school boards across Canada to set up board wide dyslexia screening programs by creating and administering screening measures and analyzing data collected from thousands of children.

We are currently planning a project that explores the relationship between oral language skills (morphology, syntax) and reading comprehension in English and French for French-immersion children. Data will be collected in children in grades 3, 4 and 5. We plan to conduct the data collection in the 2024-2025 school. year.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION:

As a research assistant, you will collect data by testing school-aged children in both the fall and winter semesters. We have a large number of measures in English and French. Training will be provided. Research assistants will have flexible schedules and work 8-10 hours per week.

Specifically, research assistants should have the following skills:

-Language skills: French language proficiency is a strong asset but since we test in both English and French, research assistants who only speak English will be able to fully participate in the project.

-Interest and experience in working with school age children

-Basic computer skills (excel, software for quantitative or qualitative data analyses). Training will be provided.

-The ability to administer standardized and experimental measures. Training will be provided.

-Personal and communication skills as team work is required

DAY AND TIMES OF LAB MEETINGS:

-We have lab meetings once every two weeks, at a time that is convenient for most people.

-You will work as part of a team under the direct and close supervision of a graduate student. The team will meet on a regular basis, as needed.