

PROGRAM 2025

KEYNOTES VIA ZOOM



IFS-Virtual Keynote Series

The Center for Research on Education and School Development (IFS) at the TU Dortmund University organizes the fifth IFS Virtual Keynote Series. Two keynotes will be held per date. A five-minute introduction is followed by the 45-minute keynotes. After each keynote will be 15 minutes time for moderated questions and answers.

13TH
JANUARY

LANGUAGE AND LEARNING IN MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES AND CLASSROOMS – LEARNING CONDITIONS AND TRAJECTORIES

3.00–4.15 pm (CET)

MONICA MELBY-LERVÅG, University of Oslo, Norway

Factors underlying academic performance in children living in poverty: Knowledge from low and middle income countries

4.30–6.00 pm (CET)

ERIKA HOFF, Florida State University, USA

Common patterns and individual differences in bilingual development: Evidence from a longitudinal study of children in immigrant families

20TH
JANUARY

LANGUAGE AND LEARNING IN MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES AND CLASSROOMS – DESIGNING AND EVALUATING TARGETED INTERVENTIONS

3.00–4.15 pm (CET)

JAMES KIM, Harvard Graduate School of Education, USA

Rethinking the reading crisis: Why far transfer should be the gold standard of literacy research

4.30–6.00 pm (CET)

FUHUI TONG, Texas A&M University, USA

From ESL to EFL: Localizing an evidence-based oral English curriculum with virtual professional development and home literacy practices for underprivileged elementary students

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The conference is free of charge and you may register here: <https://ifs.ep.tu-dortmund.de/en/ifs-virtual-keynote-series/>.

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Factors underlying academic performance in children living in poverty: Knowledge from low and middle income countries

MONICA MELBY-LERVÅG (University of Oslo, Norway)

In the talk I will first present a meta-analysis on the relationship between home language and literacy environment with children's language and literacy outcome. The meta-analysis consists of 69 independent studies with 6,496 effect sizes from studies conducted in low and middle income countries. The findings will be outlined and so will also some important lessons learned in this meta-analysis for future studies. After this I will move over to present a study where we have traced 600 children in Romania for over 8 years. About half of them belong to the Roma group, an ethnic group that often is linked to poverty and poor living conditions. I will present results from our studies on this group and in particular focus on factors that might make them able to complete their final exams and perhaps also contribute to improve their socio-economic status.

Common patterns and individual differences in bilingual development: Evidence from a longitudinal study of children in immigrant families

ERIKA HOFF (Florida State University, USA)

It might seem that early exposure to two languages is the ideal circumstance for bilingual development. However, when one of those languages is the heritage language of immigrant families and the other is the majority language of the host country, bilingualism is not a guaranteed outcome of early dual language exposure. Based on findings from a 10-year longitudinal study of children from Spanish-speaking families in the United States, this talk will describe trajectories of Spanish and English growth in these simultaneous bilinguals and will identify factors that shape those trajectories. The evidence argues that differences in the quantity of language exposure, in the quality of language exposure, and in children's own language output advantage English over Spanish and are also sources of individual differences in the level of bilingualism children achieve.

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Rethinking the reading crisis: Why far transfer should be the gold standard of literacy research

JAMES KIM (Harvard Graduate School of Education, USA)

Solving the reading crisis requires long-term solutions that promote far transfer—the ability of children to apply their knowledge and skills to tasks that differ from the original instructional context. I present findings from a 10-year research-practice partnership focused on improving third grade reading comprehension outcomes in a large metropolitan US school district. First, I demonstrate how opportunities to learn science and social studies content and vocabulary contribute to disparities in third-grade reading. Second, I share findings from a three-year randomized trial showing how sustaining and spiraling science schemas (background knowledge) and vocabulary from first to third grade can enhance students' comprehension of passages in science, social studies, and mathematics. Furthermore, the findings suggest that systematically building background and vocabulary knowledge can promote far transfer of students' reading comprehension abilities through the end of sixth grade, nearly 36 months after the conclusion of the intervention activities. To conclude, I will explain how the findings have broad relevance for reading research, policy, and practice across diverse international contexts.

From ESL to EFL: Localizing an evidence-based oral English curriculum with virtual professional development and home literacy practices for underprivileged elementary students

FUHUI TONG (Texas A&M University, USA)

In this presentation, the audience will learn about the impact of an English storytelling and re-telling intervention, accompanied by curriculum-based virtual professional development and home-based literacy on 357 Chinese students' oral English proficiency, their perception in English learning, their teachers' perceived pedagogical practices, and parents' perceived engagement in underprivileged families. The 8-week intervention utilized a localized curriculum tailored to an English-as-foreign-language (EFL) setting, incorporating four authentic English storybooks

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and scripted English lesson plans with Chinese clarification, direct vocabulary instruction, language scaffolding, modeling read-aloud, and leveled questioning strategies, delivered by two certified English teachers who participated in bi-weekly virtual professional development. In weekly take-home activities parents were encouraged to interact and practice with their children in English speaking, listening, reading, and writing. All materials were provided with detailed instructions in Chinese. Quantitative results revealed statistically significant difference in favor of treatment students on English vocabulary measure, and treatment parents on reported engagement in their children's English language learning. Qualitative data highlighted enhanced student motivation, stronger parent-child relationships, and teachers' growth in confidence and pedagogy. These results underscore the importance of curriculum localization— the transfer, adaptation, and development of values, knowledge, technology, and pedagogical/learning norms, aligning educational practices with the socio-cultural and economic context, and fostering meaningful learning outcomes and sustainable education.