Exploration of How Spanish and English Noneliciting Questions Affect the Novel Vocabulary Acquisition of Hispanic Dual Language Learners Enrolled in Head Start

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Purpose
The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of noneliciting questions (Spanish vs. English) versus noneliciting labels (Spanish vs. English) on dual language learners’ novel vocabulary acquisition.

The Article
Novel word learning in the context of shared storybook reading studies on Hispanic dual language learners (DLLs) are rare as most studies have been completed on monolingual children. This study explores the extratextual stylistic behaviors of storybook reading that encourage novel word learning in DLL preschoolers enrolled in Head Start. The authors begin the article with discussing the Hispanic population that speaks both English and Spanish as the largest language minority in the United States. The authors discuss how important storybook reading is for DLLs as it encourages language development. The authors then provide monolingual studies for methodological support where they examined vocabulary noneliciting questions and noneliciting labels as well as the impact of English and Spanish conditions. Results showed that Spanish noneliciting questions can encourage expressive vocabulary acquisition of novel Spanish words in dual language learners more so than noneliciting labels in Spanish.

What this Means for the Field
As there is a rise in the quantity of dual language learners (DLLs) in the United States educational system and there is a diminutive number of studies that look at DLLs living in the United States there is a necessary need for research in this field. While shared storybook reading can support language development in DLLs, teachers may add the Spanish noneliciting questioning style to their storybook reading strategies.

Citation

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