

- Child development and learning
- Child health/nutrition
- Family-focused objectives

## **Joy Lorenzo Kennedy**

### *Mentor:*

Gigliana Melzi, Ph.D.

### *Project Funding Years:*

2010-2012

### *University Affiliation:*

New York University

### *Project Title:*

Narrative development in dual-language learning Latino Head Start children:  
Coherence across tasks and languages

### *Project Abstract:*

Information is lacking on the normative developmental trajectory of children's narrative skills across the preschool years, particularly for DLL children. This study seeks to address this gap in the literature by assessing narrative development among 125 DLL Latino children from three Head Start programs in New York City at three time points across the school year. Children engaged in three narrative tasks – chronicling a personal experience, telling a story based on a set of pictures, and narrating a wordless picture book – will be asked to relate each story in both English and Spanish. The primary objectives of the proposed study are: (1) to understand the developmental progression of children's narrative skills in both English and Spanish; (2) to examine the effect of narrative task and language spoken on the coherence of children's narratives; (3) to investigate the relationship between children's narrative ability and other standardized measures of language ability and pre-literacy; and (4) to develop a workshop series to share knowledge gained from the proposed study with teachers and parents.

### *Sample:*

125 preschool children (59 boys; 66 girls) attending three Head Start programs in New York City, whose parents self-identified as Latino. Children come from a broad range of Latino backgrounds, including Dominican (42%), Mexican (32%), Puerto Rican (5%) and South American (5%), and all come from economically underprivileged homes. On average, children are

45.8 months old (SD = 6.5), and most (69.7%) speak Spanish as their first language.

*Measures:*

- Narrative coherence for three narrative tasks: recounting a personal experience, constructing a story from four pictures of a child playing in the park, and narrating a wordless picture book (Frog, Where Are You? [Mayer, 1969]).
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT; Dunn & Dunn, 2007)
- Test de Vocabulario en Imágenes Peabody (TVIP; Dunn, Padilla, Lugo, & Dunn, 1986)
- Preschool Word and Print Awareness test (PWPA; Justice & Ezell, 2001)
- Letter/word identification task
- Demographic questionnaire

**Kelley O'Carroll**

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*Project Funding Years:*

2010-2012

*University Affiliation:*

Harvard University

*Project Title:*

Beyond Barriers: The Relationship between Head Start Parents' Social Capital, Their Involvement, and Children's Preschool Competencies

*Project Abstract:*

Grounded in Head Start's commitment to parent involvement, this proposed study will explore whether parents' social networks and resources indirectly affect children's preschool competencies through parent involvement in learning at home and in Head Start among Puerto Rican, non-Hispanic White, and Latino immigrant families. In order to maximize parent involvement, programs can address barriers to involvement that many parents, especially immigrant and ethnic minority parents, face, including schedule conflicts, childcare needs, and work obligations (Lamb-Parker et al., 2001). In addition, programs might also boost factors that positively influence parent involvement and influence children's preschool competencies. One such factor is social capital, or resources exchanged