

*University Affiliation:*

Harvard Graduate School of Education

*Project Abstract:*

Harvard Graduate School of Education will investigate the use and effects of information book read alouds, in comparison to storybook read alouds, in Head Start classrooms. Specifically, the study seeks to answer three research questions: (a) What is the availability and use of information books, in comparison to storybooks and books of other genres, in Head Start preschool libraries and Head Start teacher read alouds? (b) Do information book and storybook read alouds have the same effect on preschool children's learning of vocabulary introduced in the books or does the effect differ by genre? (c) Do children who participate in information book and storybook read alouds differentiate their pretend reading by genre? Study participants will include the teachers and students in thirty Head Start preschool classrooms. Children will participate in read alouds, and a sub-sample of children will be randomly selected to participate in vocabulary assessments and pretend readings of books in each genre. Results of the study are expected to support the appropriateness and importance of reading aloud to young children in the information book genre, as well as the more commonly studied storybook genre.

*Sample:*

30 Head Start Teachers

300 Head Start Children

Sub-sample of 60 Head Start Children

*Measures:*

*Teachers:*

Teacher Surveys

Read Aloud Logs

*Students:*

PPVT-4

Researcher-designed target vocabulary assessment

**Meghan Fitzgerald**

*Project Title:*

Head Start in a Changing Context: How Teacher Input Improves Professional Development

*Mentor:*

Sharon Lynn Kagan, Ed.D.

*Project Funding Years:*

2008-2010

*University Affiliation:*

Teachers College, Columbia University

*Project Abstract:*

Teachers College, Columbia University will document and analyze instructional staff perspectives regarding professional development opportunities within medium- to high-quality Head Start programs. The sample will include education coordinators, teachers, and teacher assistants from three Head Start delegate agencies. The study will seek to answer the following research questions: (a) What types of professional development do the Head Start instructional staff members in medium- to high-quality Head Start programs receive? (b) How do instructional staff members perceive the effect of their professional development experiences in their practice? and, (c) What strategies do instructional staff members perceive can be employed to improve the quality and impact of professional development? The study will utilize grantee and delegate agency documents and records, education coordinator interviews, instructional staff member surveys, and teacher and teacher assistant focus groups. Through qualitative data analysis, findings will be used for policy analysis and to inform early childhood education professional development practices and services provided to the participating Head Start community.

*Sample:*

Three Head Start delegates, 104 instructional staff members

*Measures:*

Qualitative measures - Piloted questionnaires

Documents and records

Interviews

Focus groups

**Ariela Greenberg, M.S.**