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SAVE THE DATES!
SKIP Symposium
Singapore Kindergarten Impact Project

Featuring:
- What have we learned about the preschool classroom, teachers, and children?
- Bilingualism in the early years
- Development of children from disadvantaged environments

SAVE THE DATE
19 November 2019, 9am-5pm

Guest-of-Honour: Ms. Lai Wei Lin,
2nd Permanent Secretary (Education), Ministry of Education

Keynote speaker:
Prof Kathy Sylva
Professor of Educational Psychology
and Honorary Research Fellow,
Department of Education,
University of Oxford

and presentations from Investigators of SKIP

Useful for: Policy Makers, Lecturers, School Leaders, Principals, Teachers

For more information, please email the secretariat at skip.symposium@nie.edu.sg.
8th Redesigning Pedagogy International Conference

Educating for Innovation, Nurturing for Society

1–3 June 2020

The Redesigning Pedagogy International Conference (RPIC) is a biennial flagship conference hosted by the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

rpcase@nie.edu.sg  +65 6790 3865  bit.ly/rpc2020
Preschoolers' Trajectory of Number Word Learning

Numbers are foundational in mathematics. They are one of the basic ingredients in arithmetic. Despite their significance, children's learning of it remains largely unexplored, especially in bilingual children. When do children learn the meaning of "three", "ten", or "one hundred"? And how? NIE Research Scientist Dr Pierina Cheung and her research team investigate these questions in her research study. Read more.
Dr Sun He, Centre for Research in Child Development

"I am an applied linguist trained in China, the US and Netherlands. My PhD topic was on early foreign language acquisition and I focused on children from 3–5 years old on how they learn another language in instructional settings." [Read more.]
Education in the City - Cultivation of Learning through Environmental Design

The seventh installment of this series was themed on learning environments, where speakers shared on how the design of learning environments can improve student motivation and educational outcomes. Read more.

Inaugural CTFest: Sharing and Learning about Computational Thinking (CT) in Education

CTFest featured talks and discussions for teachers to learn best practices in the teaching of computational thinking. Read more.

OER Hosts Professor Tammie Ronen

Prof Tammie Ronen from Tel-Aviv University was hosted by Dr Imelda Caleon from 24 - 25 July 2019. Read more.
Prof Low Ee Ling published a paper titled "A Longitudinal Study on Starting Teachers' Retention Intentions: Do Pre-teaching Work Experience and Length of Working Years Make a Difference?" in the journal *Teaching and Teacher Education*. [Read more.](#)

Associate Prof Rita Elaine Silver published a paper entitled "Learning ‘New’ Instructional Strategies: Pedagogical Innovation, Teacher Professional Development, Understanding and Concerns" in the *Journal of Teacher Education*. [Read more.](#)

Dr Roberto de Roock and Associate Prof Mark Baildon co-wrote a paper titled "MySkillsFuture for Students, STEM Learning, and the Design of Neoliberal Citizenship in Singapore" in the *Journal of Cognition and Instruction*. [Read more.](#)
"Innovations in Educational Change: Cultivating Ecologies for Schools" is a new book co-written by Prof David Hung, Assistant Prof Azilawati Jamaludin, Dr Lee Shu Shing and Dr Wu Longkai that explores the imperatives underpinning educational reforms and identifies the role of schools in developing, disseminating, and sustaining changes in Singapore's educational context. Read more.

Research Scientist from OER's Centre for Research in Child Development, Dr Sun He, has revealed that while external and internal factors do contribute to Mother Tongue Language learning, early exposure of the language at home helps children learn the language better.
Exposure at home key to kids picking up mother tongue

Pioneer NIE study also finds cognitive ability plays bigger role for English

Amelia Teng  
Education Correspondent

It pays to speak your mother tongue language around your children, new research shows.

A first-of-its-kind study of about 800 children by the National Institute of Education found the amount of exposure a child has to his mother tongue language plays the biggest role in how much he picks up.

But how good the same child is in English depends more on his own cognitive intelligence, which largely cannot be trained.

These results, published in a top academic journal Applied Psycholinguistics, are part of the first wave of data collection from Singapore Kindergarten Impact Project, a study of pre-school children in Singapore.

One of the project's areas of focus is mother tongue language development at an early age.

Dr Sun He, a research scientist who is part of the team and the lead author for the paper, said: "As early as in K1, there are some differences in children's language proficiency and how they acquire it."

The children in the study, which is the first in Singapore to look at how differently pre-schoolers acquire language, were given tests to assess their language and cognitive abilities such as working memory, non-verbal intelligence and phonological awareness.

Of the 805 pre-school children involved, 381 were Chinese, 103 Malay and 149 Tamil. They were aged between four and five.

Their parents completed a questionnaire which asked them which languages they used at home, how much their children spoke the languages and how much they were exposed to different media like television and books.

Dr He, whose interest is in bilingualism, noted that children's learning of languages depends on internal and external factors.

Internal factors refer to cognitive abilities such as memory or multitasking skills, while external factors are related to the level of exposure in a person's environment.

Most of the families in the study used English more than their mother tongue languages, and the children also knew more English words.

Dr Sun said: "The study found that across three mother tongue languages, home environment is way more important than cognitive factors in explaining individual differences in children's vocabulary size."

For example, a child's home environment accounted for more than five times the variation in Chinese vocabulary size compared to cognitive ability, while it was the opposite for English language.

Dr Sun explained: "In Singapore, because of ample input of the English language in the environment, you've already reached a threshold of input. Beyond that, cognition plays a more important role in English language proficiency and differences between individual children."

But the "threshold" of language input has not been met across all three mother tongue languages, she added. "So it's the home environment and exposure that heavily influence how early children learn their mother tongue and have a grasp of vocabulary."

Besides reading books or listening to the radio, children also need to actively use the language to become more confident in it, instead of being passive learners, she said.

"Without usage, the language won't be alive."

The Singapore Kindergarten Impact Project study, which is looking at a range of issues including socio-emotional skills, motor skills and language development, began in 2014 and involved three years of data collection.

More results are expected to be released by the end of this year.

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The Knowledge Resource Bank (KRB) is a one-stop classroom resource depository derived from local NIE research. KRB covers a wide range of resources tailor-made for and based on the Singapore educational context.

Attending to priority areas in research and practice, KRB resources include:

- Downloadable activity sheets, infographics and lesson plans