

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND BILINGUALISM LAB

NEWSLETTER**L.A.B.****SPRING 2026**

Welcome to the official LAB Lab Newsletter! We would like to start by thanking all of the families who have participated in our studies and continuously supported us. Continue reading to find out what we have been up to this spring!

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE:

Cover Page.....	1
Meet Our Spring Team.....	2
Community Involvement.....	3-4
Conferences.....	5-8
Connecting within Lab.....	9
End of Semester & Graduation...	10
Current Studies.....	11
Thank you!.....	12

WAISMAN
CENTER

(608) 263-5764



uwbilingualism@waisman.wisc.edu

1500 Highland Avenue
Madison, WI 53705<https://lab.csd.wisc.edu>

MEET OUR SPRING 2026 TEAM!

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR



MARGARITA KAUSHANSKAYA

LAB MANAGER and SLP



DAVE CURTIS

LAB PSYCHOLOGIST



LUCIA STUBBS

RESEARCH SPECIALIST



CLARA MERKEL

DOCTORAL STUDENTS



EMMA LIBERSKY



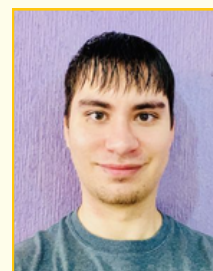
CAITLYN SLAWNY



EMILY BAGAN



CHENELLE WALKER



CHRISTOPHER PADILLA

RESEARCH ASSISTANTS



EVELYN
ANTON



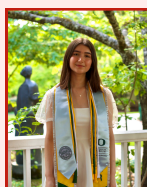
OLIVIA
BERTHER



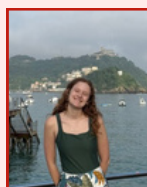
ABBY
CUI



SARA
DONOSO



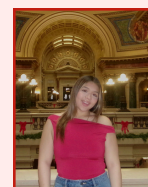
HANA
DUSSAN



CARALYN
FELCYN



PETER
FISHMAN



JANNINE
FLORES



LILY
GISSAL



SOFIA
GOLDENSTEIN



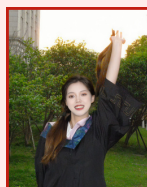
CHARLOTTE
HALL



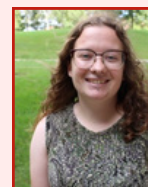
DECLAN
HALLORAN



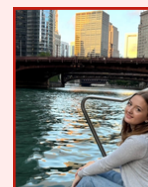
BHANU
HARIKUMAR



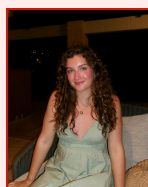
LULU
JIN



LUCY
JUMBECK



EMILIA
KEDZIOR



YANA
KRUTNYK



LEANNE
LOW



KIERA
LYKKEN



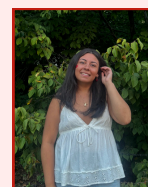
KATE
MOELLER



ZOE
NICKCHEN



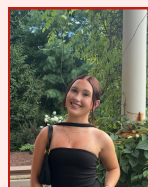
NORA
O'TOOL



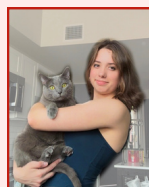
KAELYN
PEREZ



ANABELL
RAMOS



KENDALL
RYAN



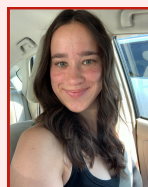
NORA
SEVERSON



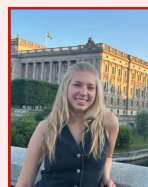
LEILA
SKOULIKARIS



AMELIA
TANG



JULIA
TSAROVSKY



GABI
WOLF



HAYDEN
WULF

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

PROJECT BRIDGING VOICES

In January, three LAB lab research assistants, Hana Dussan, Amelia Tang, and Evelyn Anton, flew to El Paso, Texas, to participate in Project Bridging Voices, a student exchange program between UW-Madison and the University of Texas - El Paso. Through faculty-led discussions, lab visits, and bilingual diagnostic experiences, students explored cultural and linguistic diversity in clinical practice. They visited community organizations, such as Ambrosio Guillen Texas State Veterans Home, Centro San Vicente, El Paso Community Foundation, and Kelly Center for Hunger Relief, where they learned about resources that support residents' health and wellbeing. Overall, it was an incredibly rewarding and fun opportunity!



"My favorite part of the UTEP program was learning about the intersection of speech language pathology and public health. Specifically, learning about how living in a border city can influence access to SLP services and learning about the importance of public health programs like English classes that are organized by SLP students. Through this program I also learned the importance of multilingual assessment and the importance of translator services in a therapy/research setting."



EVELYN ANTON

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

VOCATIONAL SPANISH TASK FORCE

Lab members Hana Dussan (founder and facilitator) and Lucy Jumbeck (facilitator) organized and led workshops for CS&D, SLP, and Audiology undergraduate and graduate students focused on Spanish terminology and communication skills relevant to the professions. Through vocabulary building, introductions, and conversational practice, participants gained confidence using Spanish in clinical settings, while developing cultural awareness and communication skills for working with Spanish-speaking clients. Open to students of all proficiency levels, the workshops fostered an inclusive, growth-oriented environment where mistakes were encouraged as part of learning. The task force hopes to support the next generation of SLPs and Audiologists in serving the broader Spanish-speaking community.

"I started the Vocational Spanish Task Force after recognizing gaps in my own knowledge as a heritage Spanish speaker and realizing how important it was to address those gaps in order to become the bilingual clinician I hope to be. I wanted to help myself and others build the skills and confidence needed to become effective bilingual clinicians, or monolingual providers, serving multilingual clients."



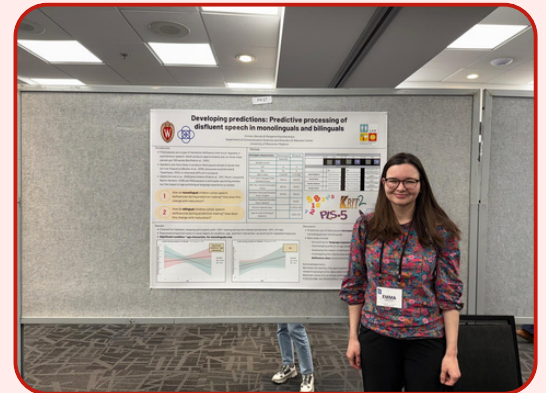
HANA DUSSAN



CONFERENCES

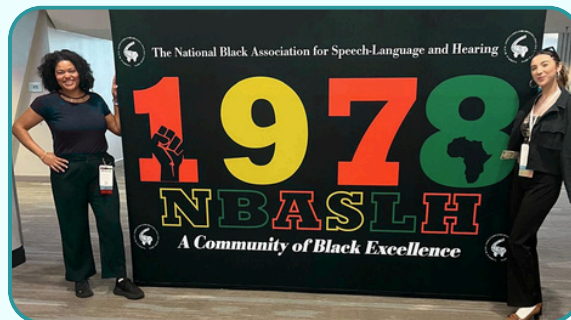
COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

Clara Merkel and Emma Libersky attended and presented at the biennial Cognitive Development Society Conference in Montreal, Canada from April 9-11. This conference brings together scholars from around the world to present their research on all aspects of cognitive development and mental life. Clara and Emma shared their project, "Which words when: Predicting vocabulary acquisition in children born preterm" and Emma also presented her dissertation project, "Predictive processing of disfluent speech in monolinguals and bilinguals."



THE NATIONAL BLACK ASSOCIATION FOR SPEECH-LANGUAGE AND HEARING CONVENTION

On April 9-11, Chenelle Walker and LAB lab alumna Margo Fassbender presented at The National Black Association for Speech-Language and Hearing (NBASLH) Convention in Atlanta, Georgia. They connected with fellow students and professionals to uphold culturally responsive practices within African American communities. Margo and Chenelle shared their research titled "*Does Race and Experience with Dialect Shape Perception of Grammaticality?*"



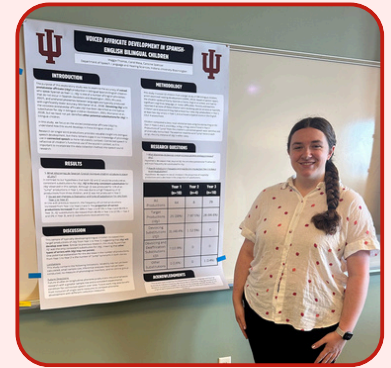
CONFERENCES

INTERNATIONAL CHILD PHONOLOGY CONFERENCE

UW-Madison hosted the 47th annual International Child Phonology Conference from May 27-29. LAB lab's own Emily Bagan and Lucas Annear were Co-Chairs, while Lucy Jumbeck was a member of the organizing committee.

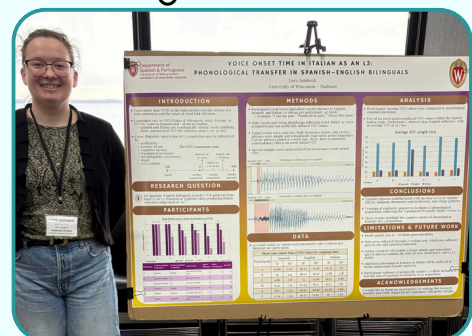


Emily Bagan presented her project on monolingual and bilingual children's word learning across accents. Lucy Jumbeck presented her project on bilingual Spanish-English adults' and children's Voice Onset Time (VOT) in naturalistic parent-child interactions. LAB lab alumna Maggie Thomas presented her poster on voiced affricate development in Spanish-English bilingual children.



WORKSHOP IN GENERAL LINGUISTICS

Emily Bagan and Lucy Jumbeck presented their projects at the Workshop in General Linguistics on March 12-14. WiGL, hosted by the UW-Madison Linguistics Student Organization, is run by students and for students and is open to presentations in any area of linguistics.



CONFERENCES

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM



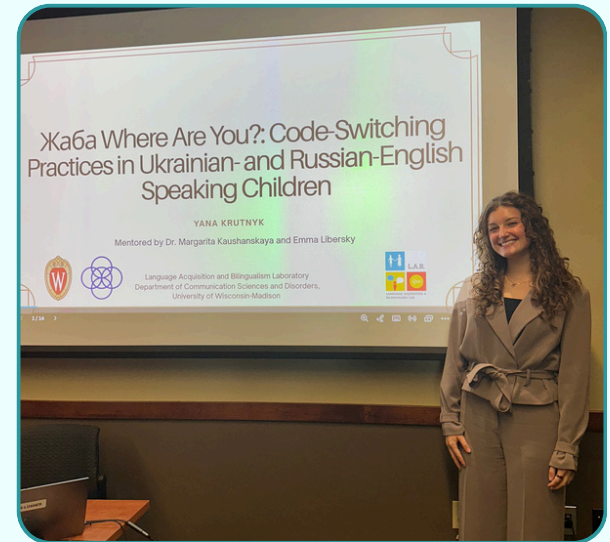
Five LAB Lab Undergraduates presented their work at the Undergraduate Research Symposium on April 17! This opportunity allowed students to connect with and receive mentorship from PhD candidates, learn how to develop studies, and present data.

ЖАБА WHERE ARE YOU?: CODE-SWITCHING PRACTICES IN UKRAINIAN- AND RUSSIAN-ENGLISH SPEAKING CHILDREN

YANA KRUTNYK

Undergraduate Research Symposium; April 17

In this study, children listened to and retold three stories: once in English, once in Russian or Ukrainian, and once using both of their languages. These language samples were transcribed and coded for code-switches to document and identify typical and atypical code-switching patterns within understudied Russian- and Ukrainian-English bilingual populations.



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MATERNAL DEPRESSION AND LANGUAGE ABILITIES OF CHILDREN BORN PRETERM

GABI WOLF

Undergraduate Research Symposium; April 17

Children born preterm are at increased risk for poor language outcomes. Early environments and interactions shape language development, meaning it is critical to identify predictors of successful language outcomes. Here, we examine the relationship between maternal depression and language ability at 36 months of age in a sample of children born preterm, while also considering impacts of socioeconomic status and parent input quality on this relationship.



CONFERENCES



THE LINK BETWEEN CODE-SWITCHING AND INHIBITORY CONTROL IN BILINGUAL CHILDREN

LEANNE LOW

Undergraduate Research Symposium; April 17

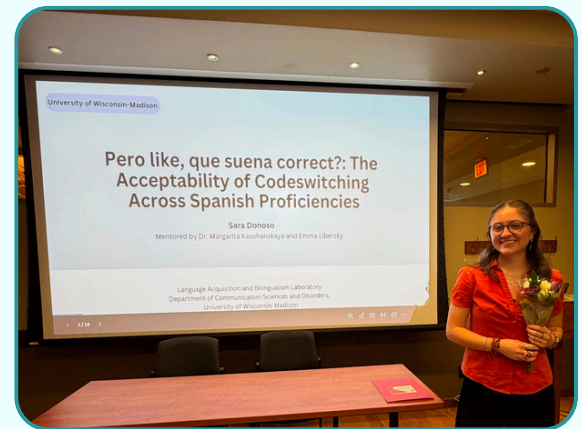
This study examines the association between frequency of code-switching and inhibitory control skills in bilingual English-Spanish and English-Mandarin speaking children between the ages of 4-6, while considering dual language proficiency as a possible factor of influence. Frequency of code-switching was coded and children completed a non-verbal task to index inhibitory control.

PERO LIKE, QUE SUENA CORRECT?: THE ACCEPTABILITY OF CODESWITCHING ACROSS SPANISH PROFICIENCIES

SARA DONOSO

Undergraduate Research Symposium; April 17

Not all forms of codeswitching are considered grammatical by native speakers, but the impact of the listener's background on these judgments is poorly understood. We present Spanish-English bilinguals with either English, Spanish, or code-switched sentences and ask them to rate them on grammaticality and collect information about the role of language proficiency, age, and attitude towards codeswitching. This information will improve understanding of how one's own background influences codeswitching acceptability judgements.



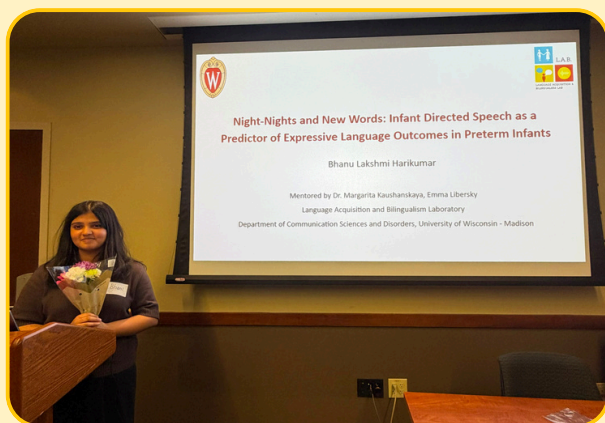
NIGHT-NIGHTS AND NEW WORDS: INFANT DIRECTED SPEECH AS A PREDICTOR OF EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE OUTCOMES IN PRETERM INFANTS

BHANU LAKSHMI HARIKUMAR

Undergraduate Research Symposium; April 17

Infant directed speech (IDS), often characterized by word repetition, may help mitigate the impact of preterm birth on child expressive language difficulties.

This study examines if the frequency of IDS used by caregivers of 16-month-old preterm infants predicts expressive language outcomes at 36-months in order to help clarify potential benefits of infant directed speech and to inform effective language therapies.



CONNECTING WITHIN LAB

JOURNAL CLUB

Each week, LAB lab team members paired up to present an article about current research on child language and development and lead lab members through a discussion. Many of these presentations were lab members' first time presenting research articles and everyone did an amazing job!



RA GATHERING

Research Assistants met over a weekend at EBNS. This was a great way to connect outside of lab, especially for those whose work schedules don't overlap. We look forward to more opportunities to spend time together!



END OF SEMESTER & GRADUATION

SPRING LAB GATHERING

We hosted our annual LAB Lab Spring Gathering at Memorial Union! While indulging in Babcock ice cream, we discussed excitement over graduation, shared our summer plans, and celebrated our successful semester. This was a great opportunity for LAB members to get to know each other in a relaxed atmosphere!



CELEBRATE OUR GRADUATES!

5 LAB Lab Research Assistants graduated this spring! The CS&D students attended a specialized graduation ceremony, where Dr. Kaushanskaya gave remarks and wished them well on their future endeavors!



NEXT STOP...



PETER FISHMAN
Working in Milwaukee



LEANNE LOW
Boston University MS-SLP



YANA KRUTNYK
UW-Madison MS-SLP



SARA DONOSO
LAB Research Specialist



ZOE NICKCHEN
UW-Madison MS-SLP

CURRENT RESEARCH

CHILD RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES!

We have a lot of studies going on right now! We are recruiting **children ages 4-9 years** who speak:

- English
- Spanish
- Mandarin
- Ukrainian
- Russian
- African American English (AAE)

Learn about how your child understands and uses language!

BILINGUAL TODDLER RESEARCH

We are recruiting toddlers who hear Spanish for studies on how bilingual children learn language!

Do you have concerns about autism?

Toddlers play games and complete language tasks with caregiver and researchers! Receive a complete autism evaluation with a licensed bilingual psychologist.

Age: 24-35 months
Earn: up to \$210 in gift card
Sessions: 4-6
Location: Waisman Center

Do you have concerns about late talking?

Watch videos, and complete language tasks with your toddler! Opportunity to speak with a bilingual speech-language pathologist.

Age: 24-35 months
Earn: up to \$45 in gift card
Sessions: 2
Location: Waisman Center or via Zoom

Have no concerns, but want to learn about your child's language development?

Learn more about how your child uses language by looking at pictures and playing language games.

Age: 18-35 months
Earn: up to \$120 in gift card
Sessions: 2-4
Location: Waisman Center or via Zoom

If you are interested in participating, please email us or fill out our Interest Form [here](https://redcap.link/lablab), redcap.link/lablab, or scan the QR code.



THANK YOU!



Thank you all for your continued support! We are excited to see what summer brings, and we hope to see you at events or within the lab!

As always feel free to reach out to us by email, uwbilingualism@waisman.wisc.edu, or phone, (608) 263-5764.