

Husky Compact Reflection: Engage as a Member of a Diverse and Multicultural World  
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In connection with the project "El Poder de los Padres: Volunteering in a Multicultural Parent-Child Group that Supports Language Development and Literacy Skills."  
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The practicum experience at El Poder de Los Padres is unique in the sense that it requires further research and exploration of a culture and language that is different from our own. In this way, the experience also allows us to engage as a member of a diverse and multicultural world. The parents who participate in El Poder de Los Padres are primarily Latino Americans and may be monolingual Spanish-speakers, or bilingual Spanish and English speakers. Most of the children are bilingual; however, some children are more proficient in Spanish than in English. In order to ethically serve these families, it is crucial to seek and understand the unique characteristics and patterns of Spanish language and literacy development, including the development of vocabulary and phonemic awareness. In this setting, it is extremely important to demonstrate cultural humility and recognize that the families of the children have their own unique experiences and opinions. As two monolingual English clinicians, it is vital to collaborate with bilingual educators and volunteers to provide a language-rich environment in both Spanish and English. To build rapport with the families, it is valuable to learn conversational Spanish phrases and utilize the bilingual speakers to effectively provide education to the parents and families of the children. Although this practicum is an opportunity to seek and apply new information, it also allows us to apply our expertise from previous courses and experiences in a holistic manner. We have gathered foundational knowledge about the field of communication disorders, including articulation and language development in children, research and evidence-based practice, and assessment and prevention of language disorders in children. When planning and implementing our lessons, we are cognizant of language and literacy development and consider cultural and linguistic differences that may affect this development.

Cultural and linguistic diversity (CLD) is incorporated into each class and experience within the Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) graduate program. Our department believes that it is invaluable to understand and welcome different cultures and languages in order to appreciate the values and beliefs of our future clients. As graduate students, we had the opportunity to attend two Community Anti-Racism Education (CARE) workshops at SCSU, which increased our understanding of racism in the workplace and informed us about cultural humility in the workplace and beyond. Throughout the CSD program, undergraduate and graduate students have the opportunity to participate in service learning. Hands across the World is an organization where we were able to experience working with children and adults from different cultures who were learning English as a second language. This range of learning opportunities allowed us to apply foundational knowledge at El Poder de Los Padres. We have incorporated our CLD skills into many aspects of this clinical setting, including: ensuring materials and intervention targets are in line with the families' beliefs and values, using translators to facilitate communication in both English and in Spanish, and providing take home activities, handouts, and directions to parents in both languages.

Language development in bilingual children has been a debated topic among professionals and parents alike - deciphering whether it is a benefit or a hindrance to the child's language acquisition. It has been recently found that, "Learning another language will not cause or worsen speech or language problems. Bilingual children develop language skills just as other children do." (American Speech-Language-Hearing

Association). Agreeing with this evidence-base, we are confident providing pre-literacy intervention in a language-rich bilingual environment. This project has allowed us to share our viewpoint with other educators and the families we serve and reinforce their decision to raise their children in a bilingual environment.