

Viridiana L. Benitez
CURRICULUM VITAE

CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Psychology
 Arizona State University
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 Website: viridiana.benitez.com

EDUCATION

2013 Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology, Indiana University-Bloomington
 2008 B.S. in Psychology, Summa Cum Laude, University of Houston
 2006 A.A. in Social Sciences, San Jacinto Community College

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2026-present Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Arizona State University
 2017-2026 Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Arizona State University
 2014-2017 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Psychology and the Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 2014-2017 Visiting Scholar, Chicana@ & Latin@ Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison

RESEARCH INTERESTS

word learning, language learning, statistical learning, bilingualism/multilingualism, parent-child interactions, attentional development

Google Scholar Profile: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=lfQCXG4AAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao>

PUBLICATIONS

*Denotes equal authorship contribution

#Denotes student/mentee co-authors

Castellana, M.A.[#], Potter, C.E., & **Benitez, V.L.** (under review). A triadic model of bilingual shared reading: Contributions of the book, parent, and child in shaping dual language use.

Castellana, M.A.[#], Clifford, B., Wilson, M., **Benitez, V.L.**, Perez, M., & Luecken, L. (under review). Longitudinal patterns and predictors of English and Spanish language knowledge in Mexican-American children from 3 to 9 years of age.

Benitez, V.L. & Vargas, E.D. (under review). When does learning begin? Latino parents' belief about learning and its link to child development values and practices

Lee, N., Hernandez Cintron, P., **Benitez, V.L.**, Lucca, K. (in press). A Toy We Have Never Seen Before: Novelty Changes the Contingent Dynamics of Infant-Caregiver Joint Exploration. *Developmental Science*.

- Benitez, V.L.** & Potter, C.E. (2026). The promise of bilingual shared reading as a tool for promoting emergent biliteracy. *Policy Insights for the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23727322261471417>
- Kuo, J. #, Li, Y. #, Yu, C.S.-P., McBeath, M., & **Benitez, V.L.** (2026). The “Wham-Womb” sound symbolic effect: English-speaking children and adults link phonemic vowel sounds with emotional arousal. *Cognition*, 275, 106603, 10.1016/j.cognition.2026.106603.
- Li, Y. #, Yu, C. S.-P., McBeath, M., & **Benitez, V.L.** (2026). U.S. English-speaking children and adults exhibit a “Gleam-Glum” sound symbolic effect linking phonemic vowel sounds with emotional valence. *Cognitive Science*. 50: e70215. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cogs.70215>
- Castellana, M.A. # & **Benitez, V.L.** (2026). Reconstructing multilingual development research: Shifting from a monolingual bias and toward a developmental systems framework. *Behavioral Sciences*, 16(3), 473. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs16030473>
- Castellana, M.A. # & **Benitez, V.L.** (2025). The role of early maternal cultural orientation on Spanish-English child-directed speech and vocabulary knowledge in Mexican-American children. *Infancy*, 30(2), e70013. <https://doi.org/10.1111/infa.70013>
- Li, Y. # & **Benitez, V.L.** (2025). Concurrences across time and sensorimotor capacities promote infant learning. *Child Development Perspectives*, 19(2), 99-107. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12531>
- Li, Y. # & **Benitez, V.L.** (2025). Probing the role of bilingualism and working memory in cross-situational word learning. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 51(5), 804-824. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xlm0001361>
- Potter, C.E., Castellana, M.A. #, Guerra, M., & **Benitez, V.L.** (2024). The balance of Spanish and English child-directed text in bilingual picture books. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687984241257400>
- Li, Y. # & **Benitez, V.L.** (2024). Lexical tone as a cue in statistical word learning from bilingual input. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 27(5), 886-900. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728923000858>
- Benitez, V.L.** & Li, Y. # (2024). Cross-situational word learning in children and adults: The case of lexical overlap. *Language Learning and Development*, 20(3), 195-218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15475441.2023.2256713>
- Benitez, V.L.** & Robison, M.K. (2022). Pupillometry as a window into young children’s sustained attention. *Journal of Intelligence*, 10(4), <https://doi.org/10.3390/jintelligence10040107>
Note: named as Editor’s Choice for the journal.
- Wojcik, E.H., Zettersten, M., **Benitez, V.L.** (2022). The map trap: Why and how word learning research should move beyond mapping. *WIREs Cognitive Science*, 13(4), e1596.
- Prather, R., **Benitez, V.L.**, Kendall Brooks, L., Dancy, C.L., Dilworth-Bart, J., Dutra, N.B., Faison, M.O., Figueroa, M., Holden, L.T.R., Johnson, C., Medrano, J., Miller-Cotto, D., Matthews, P.G., Manly, J.J., & Thomas, A.K. (2022). What can cognitive science do for people? *Cognitive Science*, 46(6), e13167
- Clifford, B.N., Tockdale, L.A., Coyne, S.M., Rainey, V., & **Benitez, V.L.** (2022). Speaking of state of mind: Maternal mental health predicts children’s home language environment and expressive language. *Journal of Child Language*, 49(3), 469-485.

Benitez, V.L., Castellana, M.A.[#], & Potter, C. (2022). How many palabras? Codeswitching and lexical diversity in children's Spanish-English picture books. *Languages*, 7(1), 69.

McBeath, M. K., Christine, S. P., Barnes, H.[#], & **Benitez, V.L.** (2021). Visual-emotional association with vowel phonemes: Support of the gleam-glum effect when paired with visual imagery. *Journal of Vision*, 21(9), 2126-2126.

Winstone, L.K.[#], **Benitez, V.L.**, Van Huisstede, L. (2021). Patterns of maternal interactive behaviors and dual vocabulary development in Mexican-American children. *Developmental Psychology*, 57(11), 1866-1879.

Benitez, V.L., & Saffran, J.R. (2021). Two for the price of one: Concurrent learning of words and phonotactic regularities from continuous speech. *PLOS ONE*, 16(6): e0253039.

Benitez, V.L., Zettersten, M., & Wojcik, E. (2020). The temporal structure of naming events differentially affects children's and adults' cross-situational word learning. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 200, 104961.

Benitez, V.L.*, Bulgarelli, F.*, Byers-Heinlein, K., Saffran, J.R., & Weiss, D. (2020) Statistical learning of multiple speech streams: A challenge for monolingual infants. *Developmental Science*, 23(2), doi: 10.1111/desc.12896

Vargas, E.D., & **Benitez, V.L.** (2019). Latino parents' links to deportees are associated with developmental disorders in their children. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 47, 1151-1168.

Benitez, V.L., & Saffran, J.R. (2018). Predictable events enhance word learning in toddlers. *Current Biology*, 28, 1-7.

Zettersten, M., Wojcik, E., **Benitez, V.L.**, & Saffran, J.R. (2018). The company objects keep: Linking referents together during cross-situational word learning. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 99, 62-73.

Bulgarelli, F., **Benitez, V.L.**, Saffran, J.R., Byers-Heinlein, K., Weiss, D.J. (2017). Statistical learning of multiple structures by 8-month-old infants. *Proceedings of the 41st annual BUCLD*, ed. Maria LaMendola and Jennifer Scott, 128-139. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press.

Benitez, V.L.*, Vales, C.*, Hanania, R., & Smith, L.B. (2017). Sustained selective attention predicts flexible switching in preschoolers. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 156, 29-42.

Benitez, V.L., Yurovsky, D., & Smith, L.B. (2016). Competition between multiple words for a referent in cross-situational word learning. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 90, 31-48.

Morse, A F., **Benitez, V.L.**, Belpaeme, T., Cangelosi, A., & Smith, L.B. (2015). Posture affects how robots and infants map words to objects. *PLoS ONE*, 10(3): e0116012.

Benitez, V.L., & Smith, L.B. (2012) Predictable locations aid early object name learning. *Cognition*, 125(3), 339-352.

Yoshida, H., Tran, D.N., **Benitez, V.**, & Kuwabara, M. (2011). Inhibition and adjective learning in bilingual and monolingual children. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2, 1-14.

Yoshida, H., Tran, D., **Benitez, V.L.**, & Kuwabara, M. (2010). Attentional Control and Early Word Learning. In *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, 32(32).

MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

Benitez, V.L. (in preparation). Codeswitching in early childhood: Implications for language and cognitive development.

GRANTS AWARDED

EXTERNAL

- 2026 National Science Foundation, Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Science (Developmental Sciences)
 Title: Collaborative Research: Advancing theories of language cognition through experimental studies of shared reading (2614900)
 Role: Principal Investigator (Collaborative Research with University of Texas at El Paso)
 Award: 2026-2029; \$297,224 to Benitez (Total award: \$588,428)
- 2023 National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
 Title: Play & Learning Across a Year (PLAY) (1R01HD094830-01)
 Role: Collaborator
 Award: 2023-2024; \$10,000 to Benitez (ASU Co-PI)
- 2017 Latino Center for Research Development Grant
 Title: Time-Out: Teacher Evaluations of Latina/o Children with Absentee Fathers.
 Role: Co-Investigator
 Award: 2017; \$5,000
- 2015 National Science Foundation SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellowship
 Title: Discovering Words in Speech (1513834)
 Role: Principal Investigator
 Award: 2015-2017; \$144,000
- 2009 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship
 Title: Bilingualism and context sensitivity (DGE-1004163)
 Role: Graduate Student
 Award: 2009-2012; \$90,000

INTERNAL

- 2023 Nancy Eisenberg Junior Faculty Scholar Award, Arizona State University (\$3,000)
 Title: Codeswitching in early childhood: Assessing changes, predictors, and impacts on language and cognitive development.
 Role: Principal Investigator
 Award: 2023-2025; \$9,000
- 2022 Online Undergraduate Research Scholars (OURS) Program Award, The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Arizona State University
 Title: Learning words across languages and development.
 Role: Principal Investigator
 Award: 2022-2023, \$18,000
- 2022 Institute of Social Science Research, Arizona State University
 Title: The linguistic and social dynamics of mother-child interactions and their link to emerging bilingual skills in early childhood.
 Role: Principal Investigator

2010 Award: \$7,000
 Social Science Diversity Initiative Graduate Student Research Grant, Indiana University
 Title: Executive function skills in monolinguals and Spanish-English bilinguals.
 Role: Principal Investigator
 Award: \$1,200

AWARDS AND HONORS

2026 Nomination, Zebulon Pearce Distinguished Teaching Award, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Arizona State University
 2025 Early Career Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award, Faculty Women's Association, Arizona State University
 2022 Indiana University Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences Outstanding Early Career Alumni Award
 2016 Morse Society Scholar, Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 2015 Cognitive Development Society Diversity Travel Award
 2014 Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science Travel Scholarship
 2013 Honorable Mention, Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship
 2012 Heller Summer Research Award, Indiana University
 2011 Cognitive Development Society Travel Award
 2011 International Symposium on Bilingualism Travel Award
 2011 Graduate and Professional Student Organization Travel Award, Indiana University

INVITED TALKS

National

2024 "Bilingual word learning: Considering cognition, context, and change." Developmental Psychology Brown Bag, Department of Psychology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
 2024 "Learning words in two languages: Considering cognition, context, and change." Psychology Colloquium, Department of Psychology, North Dakota State University.
 2024 "The science of bilingualism: How children learn words in two languages." UnidosUS Education Summit, Norfolk, CA.
 2024 "The science of bilingualism: How children learn words across languages". National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association Annual Conference, Alexandria, Virginia.
 2023 "Learning words in a bilingual world." Psychology Colloquium, Department of Psychology, California State University, Northridge
 2023 "Learning words in a bilingual world." John D. Wiley Seminar Series, Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 2023 "Learning words in a bilingual world." Cognition and Cognitive Neuroscience Brownbag, Department of Psychology, University of California-Riverside
 2022 "Learning words in a bilingual world." Cognitive Science Colloquium, Department of Cognitive Sciences, Johns Hopkins University
 2022 "Learning words in a bilingual world." Early Career Symposium, Cognitive Development Society Conference, Madison, WI
 2022 "Learning words in a bilingual world." Psychology Colloquium, Department of Psychology, University of Arizona
 2021 "Bilingual word learning under uncertainty." Cognitive Colloquium, Department of Psychological Sciences, Purdue University

- 2021 “Bilingual word learning under uncertainty.” Developmental Brown Bag, Department of Cognitive, Linguistics, and Psychological Science, Brown University
- 2021 “Learning words in a dynamic world.” Developmental Science Colloquium, Department of Human Development & Quantitative Methodology, University of Maryland
- 2020 “Learning words in a dynamic world.” Research Colloquium, Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders, New York University
- 2020 “Understanding how young children learn.” NALEO Education Leadership Academy Legislator Leadership Group Roundtable, Phoenix, AZ
- 2018 “Learning words in a dynamic world.” Baby Lab, Department of Psychology, Princeton University
- 2018 “Learning words in a dynamic world.” Cognitive Development Lab, Department of Psychology, Carnegie Mellon University
- 2016 “Space, time, competition, and word learning.” Developmental Colloquium, Department of Psychology, University of Illinois – Urbana Champaign
- 2015 “Space, time, competition, and word learning.” Department of Psychology, Rochester Institute of Technology
- 2015 “The bilingual advantage: History, pitfalls, and future directions.” Chican@ and Latin@ Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

International

- 2026 “Toward a developmental systems framework of multilingual experience.” Plenary Symposium, Cognitive Development Society Conference, Montreal, Canada
- 2021 “Learning words in a dynamic world.” Lecture for Advanced Topics in Social Neuroscience, Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile
- 2020 “Learning words in a dynamic world.” Lecture for Advanced Topics in Social Neuroscience, Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

#Denotes student/mentee co-authors

Gomez, A.[#], Browning, K.[#], Li, Y.[#], & **Benitez. V. L.** (2026). Question-asking during parent-child play with familiar and unfamiliar objects. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society Conference Biennial Meeting, Montreal, Québec, Canada.

Rajendra, S.J.[#] & **Benitez. V. L.** (2026). Bilingual word learning under uncertainty in children and adults. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society Conference Biennial Meeting, Montreal, Québec, Canada.

Witmer, D.[#], Li, Y.[#], & **Benitez. V. L.** (2026). Manual exploration of familiar and unfamiliar objects during parent-child play at home. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society Conference Biennial Meeting, Montreal, Québec, Canada.

Li, Y.[#], Landfair, J. T., Amazeen, P. G., Lucca, K., & **Benitez. V. L.** (2025). Assessing parent-child synchrony in speech and action when playing with familiar and unfamiliar objects. Talk presented at the Society for Research in Child Development 2025 Biennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN.

Malhotra, T.[#], Li, Y.[#], & **Benitez, V. L.** (2025). Stir a whisk? Toddlers increase their two-handed exploration when manipulating unfamiliar objects compared to familiar objects. Poster presented at the Society for Research in Child Development 2025 Biennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN.

- Castellana, M. A.[#], Vargas, R.[#], Ticay, V.[#], Echevarria Mejia, A.[#], Potter, C. E., & **Benitez, V. L.** (2025). Question asking during parent-child shared reading in a bilingual context. Poster presented at the Society for Research on Child Development, Minneapolis, MN.
- Lee, N., Cintron P., **Benitez, V.L.**, & Lucca, K (2025). Real-time microanalysis of caregiver-infant interactions during novelty exploration. Talk presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD). Minneapolis, MA
- Malhotra, T.[#], Li, Y.[#], **Benitez, V.L.** (2024). Stir a whisk? Children increase two-handed exploration when manipulating unfamiliar objects compared to familiar objects. Poster presented at the annual Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science, Phoenix, AZ.
- Benitez, V.L.**, Castellana, M.[#], Guerra, M., & Potter, C. (2024). Codeswitching in bilingual picture books and shared reading interactions. Talk presented at the International Congress on Infant Studies, Glasgow, Scotland.
- Lee, N., Cintron P., Keist, F, **Benitez, V.L.**, & Lucca, K (2024). What is novel in novel object exploration? Moment-to-moment changes in the dynamics of parent-infant interactions during familiarity versus novelty Exploration. Poster accepted at the Biennial International Conference on Infant Studies. Glasgow, Scotland.
- Benitez, V.L.**, Castellana, M.[#], Ramirez, L.[#], Briones, A.[#], Potter, C. (2024). Codeswitching during shared reading among bilingual parents and children. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society, Pasadena, California.
- Li, Y. [#], Lucca, K., & **Benitez., V. L.** (2024). The properties of child-directed speech in parent-toddler play with familiar and unfamiliar objects. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society, Pasadena, California.
- Castellana, M.[#], Guerra, M., Potter, C., & **Benitez, V.L.** (2023). Quantity, lexical diversity, and syntactic complexity in bilingual picture books and shared interactions. Talk presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Salt Lake City, Utah.
- Li, Y.[#] & Yu, S.-P., Randall, J.[#], Keefer, S.[#], Sather, A.[#], McBeath, M., & **Benitez, V.L.** (2023). The “gleam-glum” sound symbolic effect: English-speaking children and adults link phonemic vowel sounds with emotional valence. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Salt Lake City, Utah.
- Benitez, V.L.**, & Castellana, M.[#], Angulo Rodriguez, E.[#] (2022). Language minority caregivers codeswitch into the majority language in speech to their infants. Talk presented at the International Congress on Infant Studies, Ottawa, Canada.
- Li, Y.[#] & **Benitez, V.L.** (2022). Infants act to learn verbs from ambiguity. Poster presented at the International Congress on Infant Studies, Ottawa, Canada.
- Castellana, M.[#], Potter, C.E., & **Benitez, V.L.** (2022). Caregiver’s codeswitching behaviors during shared reading of bilingual books. Poster presented at the International Congress on Infant Studies, Ottawa, Canada.
- Castellana, M.[#] & **Benitez, V.L.** (2022). The link between early maternal language and infants' vocabulary knowledge in English and Spanish. Poster presented at the International Congress on Infant Studies, Ottawa, Canada.

Li, Y.[#] & **Benitez, V.L.** (2022). Lexical tone as a cue during bilingual statistical word learning. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society Conference, Madison, WI.

Potter, C.E., Castellana, M.[#], & **Benitez, V.L.** (2022). How many palabras? Codeswitching and lexical diversity in Spanish-English bilingual picture books. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society Conference, Madison, WI.

Li, Y.[#] & **Benitez, V.L.** (2021). Lexical tone as a cue during bilingual statistical word learning. Talk presented at the Asian Pacific Baby Constellation (ABC) Conference, virtual meeting.

Castellana, M.[#], Winstone, L.K.[#], & **Benitez, V.L.** (2021). Influence of preschool entry and maternal talk on dual language development. Poster presented at the 46th annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, virtual meeting.

*Recipient of the Paula Menyuk Award, given to the top 35 rated abstracts first-authored by a student.

Benitez, V.L., Li, Y.[#], Leedom, C.[#], & Ramalho Rocha, L.[#] (2021). Bilingual statistical word learning in children and adults. Talk presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, virtual meeting.

Benitez, V.L., Zettersten, M., & Wojcik, E. (2021). Developmental differences in the role of temporal structure in ambiguous word learning. Talk presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, virtual meeting.

Li, Y.[#] & **Benitez, V.L.** (2021). Lexical tone as a linguistic cue during cross-situational statistical learning. Poster presented at the Budapest CEU Conference on Cognitive Development, virtual meeting.

Yu, C.S.P., Stone, G., McBeath, M., Glenberg, A., & **Benitez, V.L.** (2020). Bouba-Kiki Effect Applies to Meaning as Well as Shape: /i:/ vs /ʌ/ Phonemes Generically Carry Affective Valence. Poster presented at the Psychonomic Society Conference, virtual meeting.

Winstone, L.K.[#], **Benitez, V.L.**, van Huisstede, L. (2020). Patterns of maternal interactive behaviors and dual vocabulary development in low-income Mexican-American children. Poster presented at the International Congress on Infant Studies, virtual meeting.

Bacon, D., Bulgarelli, F., **Benitez, V.L.**, Byers-Heinlein, K., Saffran, J.R., & Weiss, D. (2020). Social cues and statistical learning of multiple structures by infants. Poster presented at the International Congress on Infant Studies, virtual meeting.

Benitez, V.L., Leedom, C.[#], Fatula, E.[#], Corbin, E.[#], & Bryant, G.[#] (2019). Preschooler's statistical learning of multiple words for a referent. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society, Louisville, KY.

Benitez, V.L., Zettersten, M., & Saffran, J.R. (2019). Preschooler's remembering and learning from predictable and unpredictable events. Talk presented at the Cognitive Development Society, Louisville, KY.

Benitez, V.L. & Lalani, H.[#] (2019). Timing in naming during children's cross-situational word learning. Poster presented at the Biennial Society for Research in Child Development Conference, Baltimore, MD.

Benitez, V.L. & Smith, L.B. (2018). Fast mapping in 16-month-old infants: Now you see it, now you don't. Poster presented at the International Conference on Infant Studies, Philadelphia, PA.

Benitez, V.L. & Saffran, J.R. (2017). Predicting to learn: Toddlers learn words better from predictable events. Talk given at the International Conference on Interdisciplinary Advances in Statistical Learning, Bilbao, Spain.

Benitez, V.L. & Saffran, J.R. (2017). The time course of tracking multiple regularities in speech. Talk given at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Austin, TX.

Zettersten, M., **Benitez, V.L.**, & Saffran, J.R. (2017). When prediction violation boosts memory: 5-year-olds remember images involved in unexpected events better. Poster given at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Austin, TX

Burgarelli, F., **Benitez, V.L.**, Saffran, J.R., Byers-Heinlein, K., Weiss, D. (2016). Statistical learning of multiple structures by 8-month-old infants. Poster presented at the annual Boston University Conference on Language Development, Boston, MA.

Benitez, V.L., Vales, C., & Smith, L.B. (2015). To focus or to ignore? Activation and inhibition in young children's selective attention. Talk given at the Biennial Meeting of the Cognitive Development Society, Columbus, OH.

Vargas, E.D., & **Benitez, V.L.** (2015). Immigration and health in Latinos: How deportations are linked to child mental health problems. Talk given at the annual meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management, Miami, FL.

Pomper, R., Potter, C., **Benitez, V.L.**, & Saffran, J.R. (2015). Segmenting words of varying length: Statistics don't always win. Talk given at the International Conference on Interdisciplinary Advances in Statistical Learning, San Sebastian, Spain.

Zettersten, M., Wojcik, E., **Benitez, V.L.**, & Saffran, J.R. (2015). Learning multiple kinds of associations during cross-situational word learning. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Cognitive Science Society Conference, Pasadena, California.

Benitez, V.L. & Saffran, J.R. (2015). Discovering phonotactic patterns in fluent speech. Poster presented at the International Conference on Interdisciplinary Advances in Statistical Learning, San Sebastian, Spain.

Benitez, V.L., Vales, C., & Smith, L.B. (2014). Young children's activation and inhibition processes in a visual search task. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Cognitive Science Society Conference, Quebec City, Canada.

Yurovsky, D., **Benitez, V.L.**, Cox, G.E., & Smith, L.B. (2014). Memory representations as a window into the bilingual advantage. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Cognitive Science Society Conference, Quebec City, Canada.

Benitez, V.L., & Smith, L.B. (2014). Fragile fast mapping in 15- and 16-month-olds: The role of memory load. Poster presented at the biennial meeting of the International Conference on Infant Studies, Berlin, Germany.

Benitez, V.L., Morse, A.F., & Smith, L.B. (2013). Posture organizes word learning in 16- to 20-month-old infants. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Seattle, WA.

Benitez, V.L., Charles, M.C.[#], Yurovsky, D. (2011). Examining cross-situational word learning in bilinguals. In V.L. Benitez (organizer and chair). Word learning in bilinguals: Mechanisms and processes. Symposium presented at the 8th International Symposium on Bilingualism, Oslo, Norway.

Benitez, V.L. & Smith, L.B. (2011). The effects of bilingualism and socioeconomic status on cognitive control. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Cognitive Development Society, Philadelphia, PA.

West, K.[#], **Benitez, V.L.**, & Smith, L.B. (2011). Learning to learn: Examining one-trial learning in infants. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Cognitive Development Society, Philadelphia, PA.

Benitez, V.L. & Smith, L.B. (2010). Cross-situational word learning in bilinguals. Poster presented at the 32nd Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Portland, Oregon.

Yoshida, H., Tran, D.N., **Benitez, V.**, & Kuwabara, M. (2010). Bilingual cognitive advantage and early word learning. Paper presented at the 32nd Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Portland, Oregon.

Benitez, V. & Smith, L.B. (2010). Attention, partial knowledge, and one-trial learning. Poster presented at the 4th Annual International Cognitive Science Conference, Tomsk, Russia.

Benitez, V. & Smith, L.B. (2009). One-trial learning in 16-month-olds. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Cognitive Development Society, San Antonio, TX.

Benitez, V. & Smith, L. B. (2009). The effects of bilingualism on context sensitivity. Poster presented at the 31st Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Yoshida, H., Kuwabara, M., Tran, D., & **Benitez, V.** (2009). Bilingual cognitive consequences and mutual exclusivity effects: Mechanism suggested in adjective learning. Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Denver, CO.

TEACHING

Teaching Interests:

Developmental Psychology

Language Development

Cognitive Development

Bilingualism and Cognition

Cognitive Psychology

Arizona State University Department of Psychology

Undergraduate Courses:

PSY 498: Advanced Seminar on Language Development, Spring 2019, Spring 2020, Spring 2022, Spring 2024, Spring 2025, Spring 2026

PSY 341: Developmental Psychology, Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2018, Fall 2019 (2 sections), Spring 2021 (2 sections, ASU Sync), Fall 2022 (2 sections), Fall 2023 (2 sections), Fall 2024 (2 sections), Fall 2025 (1 section)

NEU 499: Online Undergraduate Research Scholar (OURS) Experience, Spring 2023, Spring 2024

- OURS is an initiative developed by the ASU College of Liberal Arts & Sciences to provide ASU Online students research experiences. I received funding to develop the experience, having included 10 students across both semesters.

- In 2023, the OURS initiative won the ASU President's Award for Innovation. I was part of the group of faculty who offered an experience this semester and received the award.

Graduate Courses:

PSY 598: Seminar on Language Development, Spring 2019, Spring 2022, Spring 2024

PSY 593: Cognitive Processes, Fall 2025

Indiana University Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences

Undergraduate Courses:

Introduction to Psychology: Fall 2013

Experimental Methods in Psychology-Lab: Fall 2010 (2 sections)

MENTORING

Arizona State University Department of Psychology

Current doctoral students

Sarah Rajendra, Developmental Psychology (started August 2025)

Nithiya Uppara, Cognitive Science (started August 2025)

Former doctoral students

Marissa Castellana, Ph.D., Developmental Psychology (graduated May 2025)

- Current position: Research Specialist, University Outreach and Engagement, Michigan State University

Ye Li, Ph.D., Cognitive Science (graduated May 2025)

- Current position: Postdoctoral Research Scholar, Department of Language Science and Technology, Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Doctoral Dissertation Chair

2025 Marissa Castellana

2025 Ye Li

Master's Thesis Committee Chair

In progress Sarah Rajendra

In progress Nithiya Uppara

2023 Marissa Castellana

2022 Ye Li

Comprehensive Examination Committee Chair

2024 Marissa Castellana

2023 Ye Li

Doctoral Dissertation Committee Member

In progress Lindsay Chromik, Clinical Psychology

2026 Nayen Lee, Developmental Psychology

2026 Linh Huynh, Cognitive Science

2019 Kate Hebert, Cognitive Science

2019 Beatriz de Diego-Lázaro, Speech & Hearing Sciences

Comprehensive Examination Committee Member

2026	Katerina Christhlf, Cognitive Science
2025	Sophia Baia, Cognitive Science
2024	Lindsay Chromik, Clinical Psychology
2023	Nayen Lee, Developmental Psychology

Master's Thesis Committee Member

In progress	Lindsey Rosenthal, Clinical Psychology
2025	Elise Mahaffey, Developmental Psychology
2024	Kuo-Wei Chen, Cognitive Science
2021	Christine Yu, Cognitive Psychology
2019	Renee Benoit, Developmental Psychology
2018	Laura Winstone, Clinical Psychology

Undergraduate Psychology Honors Thesis Committee Chair:

In progress	Lily Allen
2025	Adriana Echevarria-Mejia
2025	Audria Vestal
2025	Delaney Witmer
2023	Jada Randall
2020	Heather Barnes (co-chair)
2020	Elaina Corbin
2019	Sara Quiñones
2019	Hanna Lalani
2018	Emily Smith

Arizona State University Master's program in Auditory and Language Neuroscience**Master's Thesis Committee Chair**

2024	Jillian Kuo
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Master's Thesis Committee Member

2024	Surbhi Mendhe
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Lab Rotation Mentees

2026	Shreya Srungarapu
2025	Crystal Brucato
2024	Renee Kang
2023	Surbhi Mendhe
2022	Jillian Kuo
2021	Emily Rohn

Arizona State University, Learning & Development Lab

I have mentored over 100 undergraduate students in my research laboratory at ASU, the majority of whom are from underrepresented backgrounds. A full list can be found at my lab website.

Student Awards and Recognitions

These are awards for which I have nominated students.

Graduate students

Ye Li:

2024 Outstanding Mentor Award, Graduate and Professional Student Association, Arizona State University
 2023 Psychology Graduate Scholar Doctoral Award, Department of Psychology, Arizona State University
 2023 Graduate Excellence Award, The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Arizona State University
 2022 Research Excellence Award, Graduate and Professional Student Association, Arizona State University

Marissa Castellana:

2024 Outstanding Research Award, Graduate and Professional Student Association, Arizona State University
 2023 Martha E. Bernal Memorial Scholarship Award, Department of Psychology, Arizona State University
 2023 Faculty Women's Association Distinguished Graduate Student Award, Arizona State University
 2023 College Graduate Excellence Award, The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Arizona State University
 2022 Outstanding Mentor Award, Graduate and Professional Student Association, Arizona State University
 2020 Cialdini Early Graduate Career Award, Department of Psychology, Arizona State University (\$1,000)
 2020 Research Excellence Award, Graduate and Professional Student Association Arizona State University

Undergraduate students

Audria Vestal (Spring, 2026): Department of Psychology's Best Undergraduate Honors Thesis Award
 Anyssia Gomez (Summer, 2025): 2024-25 Robert Cialdini/Psi Chi Undergraduate Research Grant for Field Research in Social Psychology
 Luka Smolens (Fall 2025, Spring 2026): Jenessa R. Shapiro Undergraduate Research Scholarship
 Anyssia Gomez (Fall 2024, Spring 2025): Jenessa R. Shapiro Undergraduate Research Scholarship
 Luka Smolens (Summer 2024): Emerging Scholar Intern
 Tanvi Malhotra (Summer 2023, Summer 2024): Emerging Scholar Intern
 Beatrice Pasqual (Fall 2023): Online Undergraduate Research Scholar Scholarship
 Nataly Alcala (Fall 2023, Spring 2024): Jenessa R. Shapiro Undergraduate Research Scholarship
 Evelyn Cardona (Fall 2022, Spring 2023): Jenessa R. Shapiro Undergraduate Research Scholarship
 Noemi Rodriguez (Fall 2021): Department of Psychology Dean's Medal Award
 Ema Angulo Rodriguez (Fall 2021, Spring 2022): Jenessa R. Shapiro Undergraduate Research Scholarship
 Gillian Bryant (Fall 2019): Department of Psychology Dean's Medal Award
 Emily Smith (Spring, 2019): Finalist, Department of Psychology's Best Undergraduate Honors Thesis Award
 Marianna Kaneris (Fall, 2018): Department of Psychology Dean's Medal Award

Mentoring activities at past institutions:

2015-2016 PASOS Mentoring Program (2 students), Chican@ & Latin@ Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 2016-2017 Independent Study in Psychology (1 student), University of Wisconsin-Madison
 Spring 2016 Independent Study in Chican@ & Latin@ Studies (1 student), University of Wisconsin-Madison
 Summer 2015 Supervision and co-mentorship of 1 undergraduate research assistant, Psychological Research Experience Program (PREP), University of Wisconsin-Madison
 2010-2012 Supervision and mentorship of two undergraduate Honors Thesis students, Indiana University
 2008-2013 Supervision and mentorship of 17 undergraduate research assistants, Indiana University

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**Reviewing: Journal Editorial Board Membership**

2023-2026 *Frontiers in Developmental Psychology*, Cognitive Development

Reviewing: Grant Panels

2024 National Science Foundation

Reviewing: Journals (Ad Hoc)

Aging, Neuropsychology, and Cognition; Applied Psycholinguistics; Bilingualism: Language and Cognition; British Journal of Developmental Psychology; Child Development; Child Development Perspectives; Cognition; Cognitive Psychology; Cognitive Science; Current Directions in Psychological Science; Developmental Psychology; Developmental Science; Early Years; Frontiers in Psychology; Infancy; International Journal of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education; Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition; Journal of Experimental Child Psychology; Journal of Child Language; Journal of Cognition; Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition; Journal of Educational Psychology; Languages; Language Development Research; Language Learning; Language Learning and Development; Learning and Individual Differences; Neuropsychologia; PLOS One; Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology; Scientific Reports

Reviewing: Conferences (Ad Hoc)

Boston University Conference on Language Development, Cognitive Development Society, Cognitive Science Society Conference, International Conference on Infant Studies, International Symposium on Bilingualism, Society for Research in Child Development Conference, Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science Conference

Reviewing: Grant Agencies (Ad Hoc)

2025 National Science Foundation
2022 National Science Foundation

Professional Committees/Roles:

2023-present Advisory Council Member, Latino Infant Initiative, UnidosUS and Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors
2020-2021 American Psychological Association, Division 7 Early Career Representative
2019-2020 International Conference on Infant Studies, Panel Review Co-Chair
2015-2016 Finance Sub-Committee, Latino Caucus, Society for Research in Child Development
2014 Student Presentations Judge in Psychology, Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science Conference

Departmental Service at Arizona State University:

2025-2026 Chair, Nancy Eisenberg Distinguished Speaker Series Committee
2024-2025 Member, Nancy Eisenberg Distinguished Speaker Series Committee
2019-present ENERGIZE Initiative Faculty mentor. ENERGIZE is an initiative dedicated to facilitating undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds entering psychology research labs to gain research experience. As a Faculty Mentor, I am listed as a potential mentor for interested ENERGIZE students. The majority of my lab are students from the ENERGIZE initiative.
2017-present Member, Developmental Psychology Area. I attend by-weekly meetings with faculty and students to enhance student training and contribute to the intellectual environment of the area. For example, I provide students with feedback on their research presentations, discuss student progress, help develop initiatives that support student success, and sit on committees for PhD students in the area.
2017-present Member, Cognitive Science Area. I attend weekly seminars where I provide students with feedback on their research presentations and present on my own research. I also attend meetings with faculty to discuss student progress and sit on committees for PhD students in the area.
2022 APPS Faculty Mentor. ASU-Psych4All-PsiChi-SciTech (APPS) is a program targeted at high school students from underrepresented backgrounds to promote their interest in psychological

science. As a faculty mentor, I spoke to high school students about attending ASU, becoming a psychology major, and having a career in psychology.

- 2018-2022 Member, Cialdini Leap Forward Committee
- 2018-2019 Member, Cognitive Neuroscience Search Committee
- 2018 Panelist, T32 Seminar Job Market Panel
- 2018 Participant, Start with a Spark, Faculty and transfer student mixer
- 2017 Faculty representative, Psychology Alumni Leadership Council Meeting

University Service at Arizona State University:

- 2018 Participant and Presenter, ASU Inequality Research Network

Departmental Service at University of Wisconsin-Madison:

- 2014-2016 Member, Diversity Committee, Department of Psychology
- Spring 2015 Co-editor of student journal: *Concientización*, Chican@ and Latin@ Studies

Professional Memberships

- Society for Research in Child Development
- Cognitive Development Society
- International Congress on Infant Studies
- Cognitive Science Society
- Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science
- American Psychological Association
- American Psychological Association Division 7 (Developmental Psychology)

Professional Development

- 2025 Mentoring Matters Panel, Graduate College: Supporting Doctoral Success from Candidacy to Completion, Arizona State University
- 2024 Raising a Resilient Scientist Series, National Institute of Health, Office of Intramural Training & Education
- 2023 Junior Faculty Upward Mobility in Psychology (JUMP) Summit
- 2017-2018 New Faculty Workshop, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Arizona State University
- 2015-2017 Professorial Advancement Initiative, Big Ten Academic Alliance
- 2015-2016 Leadership Institute, Learning Communities for Institutional Change & Excellence, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Summer 2015 Research Mentor Training, *Entering Mentoring* Series, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- July 2015 Summer Leadership Institute, Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science
- Jan. 2014 Visiting Scholar, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy, University of New Mexico
- Sept 2014 Future Faculty Career Exploration Program, Rochester Institute of Technology
- Oct 2012 Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, The Compact for Faculty Diversity
- June 2009 Dynamic Field Theory Summer School, University of Iowa

CONSULTING

- 2023-present BSP Research
 - Moderate focus groups and individual interviews in English and Spanish.
 - Facilitate discussions with participants from diverse backgrounds.
 - Produce summaries and narrative reports tailored to client needs.

- 2023-2024 Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors
- Provided expertise on early childhood development for family-facing educational materials.
 - Advised initiatives supporting early childhood policy and community engagement.

PUBLIC WORK

Policy

- 2023-present As a member of the Advisory Council for the Latino Infant Initiative, I assisted in the creation of the [Latino Infant Initiative Policy Agenda](#), a road map for state and federal policies that ensures the health, wellbeing, and learning of Latino infants and their families in the United States.
- The policy agenda has been disseminated to organizations across the nation that work with Latino children and families. It has also been disseminated to members of congress via a Capitol Hill briefing held in 2024.

Community Partnerships

- 2018-present Children's Museum of Phoenix/Museo de los Niños de Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ. Via this partnership, my research team has outreached to over 300 monolingual and bilingual children and their families, providing them the opportunity to participate in research and disseminating research to them on the museum floor. For over 7 years, I have maintained this partnership by keeping in constant contact with our point person at the museum, organizing meetings to assess the efficacy of the partnership, and organizing team schedules and activities that serve the needs of both the researchers and the museum.
- 2024-present Edna Vihel Arts Center, Tempe, AZ. Via this partnership, my research team outreaches to families in the community by participating in their Free Art Friday events, which occur once a month. My team creates activities for young children and their parents that teach and promote development.

Community Engagement and Service

I organize and coordinate my research team to set up a table with family-friendly activities to disseminate research to families and invite them to participate in our research, partnering with several initiatives occurring on and off campus that target community members. Below is a list of some of those events.

- Since 2021, ASU Homecoming Block Party, Tempe, AZ. Students, parents, and alumni are invited on to celebrate ASU.
 - Since 2018, ASU Open Door Event, Tempe, AZ. The community is invited on campus to experience ASU's programs, departments, and schools.
 - 2023 and 2024, Poder in Action Pueblo Resource Fair. This resource fair targets Latino families and offers information, resources, and programs that benefit them.
- 2015-2017 Board member and Treasurer, UNIDOS Against Domestic Violence, Madison, WI
- 2014-2015 Career Pathways volunteer, Centro Hispano, Madison, WI
- *Outstanding Volunteer Award (Nov. 2014)
- 2009-2010 Child Care volunteer, Centro Comunal Latino, Bloomington, IN

Community Workshops

- 2026 Presenter, *The science of bilingualism*. Workshop on early childhood bilingualism delivered to preschool and elementary school teachers and staff, Paiute Community Center, Scottsdale, AZ
- 2025 Co-presenter, *Early child development and milestones*. Workshop on early childhood development delivered to art teachers, Edna Vihel Arts Center, Tempe, AZ
- 2016 Presenter, *The power and politics of bilingualism*, Workshop delivered to undergraduate Latino students, Xicanx Institute for Education and Self Determination, Madison, WI

- 2016 Presenter, *Bilingualism and cognitive control*, Workshop delivered to Latino high school students, Escalera Summer of STEM Club, Madison, WI
- 2016 Presenter, *Brain power!*, Workshop delivered to Latino high school students, Latino Youth Summit, Madison, WI
- 2015 Presenter, *Brain power!*, Workshop delivered to Latino high school students, Latino Youth Summit, Madison, WI

Media Coverage

- 2026 Interviewed on [La Hora del Cafesito en la Radio](#), a Spanish-language segment by Conecta Arizona, transmitted on La Onda Radio (99.5FM & 1190AM) in Phoenix, AZ and online.
- 2026 Interviewed by [KJZZ Phoenix \(91.5FM\)](#) on my research on emotional sound symbolism.
- 2026 Interviewed on Voces De La Frontera, a Spanish-language podcast on bilingualism, transmitted on Radio Sonora (96.9FM) in Sonora, Mexico, and online.
- 2026 Interviewed on the [It's Innate Podcast](#) about my career trajectory and research.
- 2024 Panelist on the [Somos Latine Families: A family to family real talk conversation Webinar](#). Episode was on Language Justice: Embracing Biculturalism and Multilingualism for Latine Children and was hosted by the Brazelton Touchpoints Center and The Children's Partnership.
- 2022 Interviewed on [The Stanford Psychology Podcast](#) on my work on predictability and word learning
- 2022 [Interviewed on ¡Ya es hora!, Prensa Arizona](#) (online Spanish-speaking news media) on my work on Spanish/English bilingual books.
- 2022 [ASU News](#) story (in English and Spanish) on our bilingual books work
- First ASU News story to be provided in English and Spanish
- 2018 [ASU News](#) story about my work on predictability and word learning
- 2018 [ASU News](#) story about my new lab
- 2015 [News coverage](#) about my work on how posture affects word learning in infants and robots.
- 2015 [HuffPost story](#) I wrote about my family's story going through the public school system.