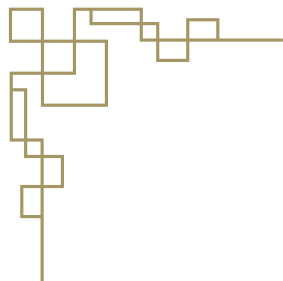




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# 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual German American Graduate Student Research Symposium

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# DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



**Carolin Angermayr**

## **“Digital Tools and AI Technologies in Lower Secondary English Language Teaching: Empirical Insights into Opportunities, Benefits, and Challenges from English Teachers’ Perspectives”**

The English subproject of the DigiSU research group at Ludwigsburg University of Education empirically studies the use of digital and AI-based tools in English teaching. Using mixed methods, it analyzes teachers’ practices, challenges, and opportunities and derives recommendations for effective technology integration and teacher professional development.

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**Daniel Maxwell**

## **“Investigating Educator Preparation Program Faculty Decisions on Generative Artificial Intelligence Adoption”**

Framed by Rogers’ Diffusion of Innovations, this qualitative case study examines GenAI adoption amongst EPP faculty. Findings reveal a non-linear process anchored by a “Human Essence” theme. While valuing authenticity, faculty view ethical concerns such as integrity and security as gatekeepers that complicate the decision to adopt AI.

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**Helena Heizler**

## **“Multimodal Worlds of Poetry in Reading and Literature Education as a Catalyst for School Transformation? Development and Evaluation of a Participatory Professional Development Program with Primary School Teachers – A Design-Based Research Study”**

To effectively support and further develop urgently needed transformation processes in the education system, research settings themselves must adapt and evolve accordingly (Eickelmann et al., 2024). This dissertation project therefore fosters close collaboration between research and practice and develops, together with primary school teachers, a professional development program for the co-creative engagement with poetry and the creation of a poetry blog in reading and literature education. Methodologically, the project is situated within a Design-Based Research framework. For evaluation, multiple qualitative data sources are combined through methodological triangulation, including interviews and classroom observations, which are analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2024).

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**Mario Manzocco**

## **“Digital Story-Based Tasks in EFL Secondary School: Investigating the Impact of Narrative Context on Cooperative Language Learning”**

This study investigates how narrative context in cooperative digital language tasks affects EFL vocabulary acquisition, communicative competence, and learner engagement. Using a quasi-experimental design with German secondary school students, it compares story-embedded digital puzzles to equivalent non-narrative tasks, bridging Task-Based Language Teaching, Dynamic Systems Theory, and digital game-based learning research.



# EDUCATION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS



**Adele Vensel, Dr. Michael Matthews**

## **“Motivation and Self-Regulation Among College Students”**

This research examines underachievement among first-year gifted college students at a regional university. Through qualitative interviews, the study explores how motivation, self-regulation, and program-related expectations influence academic performance. Findings highlight student-identified factors contributing to underachievement and suggest targeted secondary and postsecondary interventions to support gifted learners' successful transition to college.

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**Kailey Galloway-Mays, Kendalee Marcus, Dr. Leslie Ann  
Bross, Dr. Charles L. Wood**

## **“Power Card Strategy to Support Early Work Skills of Transition-Aged Youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities”**

Transition-aged youth with intellectual disabilities often experience employment challenges and require support to develop early work skills. This study examined the effects of a power card strategy to teach photocopying skills. A multiple baseline across participants design with maintenance and generalization conditions was implemented.

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**Nick Oluoch**

## **“Blended Preparation for Inclusion: Faculty Perspectives on Contemporary EI/ECSE Educator Preparation Models”**

This study examines faculty perspectives on contemporary blended early childhood and early childhood special education (EI/ECSE) preparation programs. Through interviews, the study explores definitions, national trends, and recommendations for effectively preparing educators to support meaningful inclusion in complex and diverse early learning contexts.



# LANGUAGE AND LITERACY



**Anni Lenz**

## **“Towards Inclusive Future Literacies”**

This project critically examines ways to advance literacy and language awareness in early year learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Moving beyond traditional reading and writing to cultivate future-relevant literacies (e.g., emotional, critical, plurilingual), the project investigates pedagogical frameworks that encourage diverse learners’ development of agency and essential future skills.

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**Julia Fuchs**

## **“Sound Play in Picture Books”**

This prospective teacher research project explores how sound play during a read-aloud of *Oi Frog!* supports oral participation and phonological awareness in Grade 4 EFL students. Using structured observation and a short student questionnaire, engagement with rhyme, repetition, and playful language will be documented.

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**Leigh A. Baker, Charles L. Wood, Corrine R. Kingsbery,  
Erin K. Washburn, and Angela I.  
Preston**

## **“Effects of Multilevel Peer Coaching on Preservice Teachers’ Fidelity of Early Reading Instruction”**

This poster presentation provides teacher preparation programs, teacher educators, and preservice teachers with the effects of multilevel peer coaching on preservice teachers’ fidelity of implementation of early reading instruction during an enhanced clinical experience.

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**Rachelle Breuer, Anni Lenz**

## **“Co-Constructing Narratives with AI: Digital Storytelling as a Learning Design in Higher and School Education”**

This poster explores AI-driven digital storytelling as a learning design in higher education. Drawing on narrative, multimodal literacy, and learner-centred design, it conceptualises AI as a co-constructive narrative partner. Quantitative and qualitative data from questionnaires and student tasks reveals opportunities and limitations for agency, inclusion, ethics, curriculum, assessment, and future digital pedagogy.

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**Wendy Mueller**

## **“Emotional Regulation in Reading Comprehension”**

This study explores how emotional regulation—specifically motivation and engagement—impacts reading comprehension in Tier 3 middle school students. Grounded in the Active View of Reading, targeted interventions improved vocabulary, strategy use, executive function, and comprehension, highlighting the critical role of self-regulation in literacy development for struggling adolescent readers.

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**Yeonhee Lee**

## **“Bridging School and Home for Speech-Language Skills Carryover: Caregiver and School-Based SLP Perspectives”**

Carryover from school-based speech therapy to home—generalizing school communication skills into daily routines—is crucial yet understudied. We interviewed school speech-language pathologists and primary caregivers of pre-K–5 children receiving services about school-home carryover. Thematic analysis identified key facilitators and barriers, informing practical strategies to support successful carryover across settings for families.



# SOCIOCULTURAL ASPECTS OF EDUCATION



**Anastasia Proctor**

## **“Bioecological Friction in Elementary School Educators Self-Efficacy”**

This mixed-methods study investigates how teachers describe and enact self-efficacy in daily classroom practice through the lens of Bronfenbrenner’s Bioecological Model. Analyzing 12 weeks of longitudinal data, the research identifies the role Bandura’s four sources of efficacy; mastery, vicarious experience, social persuasion, and affective states, play in shaping teacher beliefs. By quantizing qualitative code densities from interviews and policy logs, the methodology reveals how these proximal processes fluctuate to sustain or erode educator confidence within diverse instructional tracks.

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**Alexandria "Alexx" Josey**

## **“If She Can Do It, So Can I: Increasing Black Girls' Career Interests Through Community Partnerships”**

This proposal examines integrating sustained participation from professionals from the community into classrooms to increase Black girls’ interest in diverse careers. Research shows expert collaboration dispels career misconceptions and boosts student interest. While early exposure matters, this study addresses the gap by focusing on consistent, curriculum-embedded engagement.

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**Katharina Maria Schneider, Dominique P. Rauch,  
Scott P. Kissau**

## **“German vs. US teachers’ Attitudes Towards Multilingualism in Class – A Cross-national Comparison”**

Positive Teacher Attitudes Towards Multilingualism In Class (TATMIC) are crucial for multilingual students’ learning experience in school. We measured TATMIC from a psychological perspective in US- and German teachers in order to compare differences between them as well as between pre- and in-service teachers in both nations.

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**Latonda Mitchell**

## **“The Invisible Weight: Perfectionism in the Lives of Gifted Black Girls”**

This research investigates perfectionism among gifted Black girls and how it influences their academic, social, and emotional experiences. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, the study uncovers patterns of pressure, resilience, and identity negotiation, offering implications for educators committed to culturally responsive and wellness-centered support.

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**Rudy J Hawley**

## **“Who Makes the Band? An Analysis of Representation in N.C. All-District Bands”**

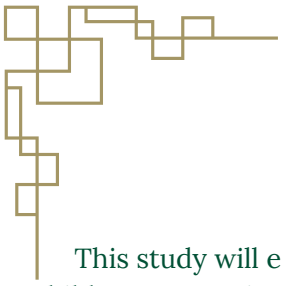
Research on secondary honors bands is sparse, focusing mostly on auditions. This study examines school representation within a North Carolina All-District Honors Band program (2023–2026), specifically analyzing Title I status. Given these ensembles’ role in career pipelines, evaluating socioeconomic distribution across public, private, and charter schools is vital for equity.

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**Tyisha Terry**

## **“Black Students' Perceptions of Wellness Education Programs at Historically White Institutions”**

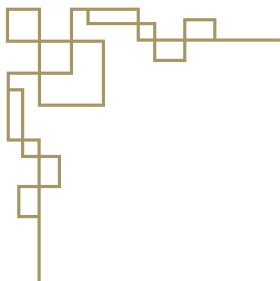
Wellness education improves college students’ health knowledge and behaviors, yet students of color face barriers to participation. Using an interpretative phenomenological approach, this study explores Black students’ perceptions of wellness education at historically White institutions. Findings indicate wellness programs as accessible but lack representation, informing more inclusive wellness practice and programming.



**YeEun Lee**

**“The Importance of Philosophy for Children”**

This study will examine how Philosophy for Children (P4C) plays an important role in children’s lives. As many children are getting more exposed to technology and screen time, it is essential to investigate how they can develop and enhance their critical thinking skills. Thus, P4C is necessary for children.



# OTHER



**Andrea Mercier-Droste, Solène Brison**

**“Bilingual Voices, Unique Journeys: Exploring the Complexities of Foreign Language Learning and Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms”**

We're exploring bilingual pupils' (German AoA>6) foreign language learning experiences and needs in grades 6-9 and English/French FL teachers' attitudes, experiences and needs in the multilingual classroom. The goal is to create a pamphlet with helpful tips, visuals and ideas for teachers to consider and potentially implement.

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**Baigalmaa Shura**

**“Perspectives and Experiences of Researchers on Participant Recruitment in Research in Early Childhood Special Education”**

Recruiting research participants could be challenging in early intervention and childhood special education research. We collected data through an online questionnaire to examine researchers' recruitment experiences, including effective strategies and barriers. We will use descriptive statistics and thematic analysis to synthesize findings and develop recommendations for strengthening recruitment and feasibility.

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**Stori Cox**

**“Preparing Globally Ready Educators: The Role of Internationalized Education Programs”**

This study examines how internationalized teacher education programs support preservice teachers' global readiness. Using a mixed-method comparative case study of programs in the United States and Germany, the study explores how policy, curriculum, and field experiences shape preservice teachers' development of global competencies and preparation for culturally diverse classrooms.

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**Lorenz Sage**

**“Power-to-X Methanol as an Energy Carrier – A Focus of Science Education”**

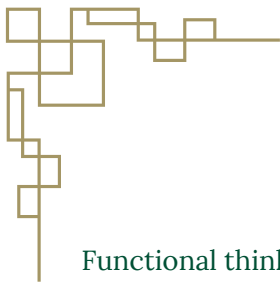
Current societal topics like Power-to-Methanol (PtM) should be included in chemistry lessons to promote Education for Sustainable Development. PtM links climate protection, chemical processes, and renewable energy storage. This research develops experimental and conceptual approaches for teaching PtM, fostering energy and climate competence in schools.

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**Brandy Hailey**

**“Rubric Clarity, Calibration, and Equity: Examining Scoring Practices in the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF)”**

This study examines the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) competition rubrics to evaluate alignment with gold-standard assessment practices. We analyze rubric weighting, scoring equity, and interpretive alignment between students and judges. Findings highlight how rubric clarity and calibration may strengthen fairness, transparency, and equitable evaluation in high school STEM competitions.



**Kerstin Frey**

**“Promoting Students’ Functional Thinking”**

Functional thinking, as a way of thinking in terms of relationships, dependencies, and change, is important in mathematics education and everyday life. Nevertheless, it poses significant challenges for many students. The poster presents empirical findings from the FunThink project, which aims to promote students’ functional thinking.

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**Aurélie Kono**

**“Higher Education Internationalisation: African Student Mobility: A Francophone Perspective”**

Mobility of students across borders remains central to higher education internationalisation. This poster reviews foundational concepts of internationalisation and examines emerging mobility patterns from Africa, focusing on francophone Sub-Saharan African students. It situates my research on students’ motivations and experiences in the context of vertical and horizontal academic mobility.

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**Karen Kopitsky**

**“Engaging with GenAI: Case-based Learning and Differentiated Instruction in Elementary Educator Preparation”**

Using Case-based learning (CBL), teacher candidates (TCs) consider authentic and complex problems within simulated educational scenarios. Partnering with GenAI, TCs in an assessment course considered how to differentiate instruction for elementary students. Findings from the pre- and post-questionnaire provided insights into students’ competency growth in CBL, differentiated instruction, and GenAI.

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**Jennifer L. Merry**

**“Balancing the Chord: Examining the Self-Efficacy of Music Educators and Their Motivation Levels of Retention in North Carolina”**

With a growing and continued trend of teacher attrition, this study examines how current secondary music ensemble educators in North Carolina report exposure to self-efficacy inputs and job satisfaction, compared to their self-reported motivation to remain in their current positions, using a non-experimental quantitative correlation approach.

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**Dr. Olga Bonath**

**“Who Wants to Be Capable – On Young People’s Desire to Develop Artistic Skill”**

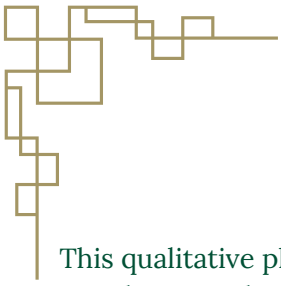
This contribution examines \*Könnenwollen\*—the will to become capable—as a key driver of young people’s artistic development. Moving beyond fixed ideas of innate talent, it understands artistic skill as a dynamic process shaped by motivation, sustained practice, flow experiences, and supportive relationships that foster self-efficacy, perseverance, creativity, and long-term artistic growth.

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**Alexander Kuuskoski**

**“Pronunciation Knowledge Base of Pre-service Teachers in Germany”**

This project explored the knowledge base pronunciation of pre-service teachers in southwest Germany as a way of combating what Darcy called ‘the pronunciation teaching paradox’ (Darcy 2018). The primary purpose was to help equip teachers with concrete knowledge of common learner difficulties related to pronunciation in their future school context.



**Amy R. Work, Skylar Clark, John R. Culbreth**

**“Play Therapists and Parent Consultation: A Qualitative Study”**

This qualitative phenomenological study explored how eight play therapists conduct parent consultation in play therapy. Thematic analysis showed consultation is a deliberate, relational process: orienting caregivers, understanding the child in context, setting goals, empowering parents, and strengthening alliance. Barriers in training and logistics emerged.



**Thank you!**