

Viridiana L. Benitez
CURRICULUM VITAE

CONTACT INFORMATION

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2017-Present Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Arizona State University
2014-2017 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2014-2017 Visiting Scholar, Chican@ & Latin@ Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison

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

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Monolingual and bilingual language development, word learning, attentional development, statistical learning

RESEARCH GRANTS AND AWARDS

2017 Latino Center for Research Development Grant, Co-PI (\$5,000)
2016-2017 Morse Society Scholar, Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2015-2017 National Science Foundation SBE Postdoctoral Research Fellowship - Broadening Participation (\$144,000)
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 (\$3,000)
2011 Cognitive Development Society Travel Award
2011 International Symposium on Bilingualism Travel Award
2011 Graduate and Professional Student Organization Travel Award, Indiana University
2010 Social Science Diversity Initiative Graduate Student Travel and Research Grant, Indiana University (\$1,200)
2009-2012 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (\$90,000)

PUBLICATIONS

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. *Equal authorship contribution

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 Developmental Psychology*, 2, 1-14.

PUBLICATIONS IN PROGRESS

Benitez, V.L., & Saffran, J.R. (under review). Which comes first? Tracking words and their phonotactic patterns in continuous speech.

Zettersten, M., Wojcik, E., **Benitez, V.L.**, & Saffran, J.R. (under review). The company objects keep: Linking referents together during cross-situational word learning.

Vargas, E.D., & **Benitez, V.L.** (under revision). Deportations are linked to developmental disorders in Latino children.

Benitez, V.L., & Saffran, J.R. (in prep). Predicting to learn: Toddlers learn better from predictable than unpredictable events.

Benitez, V.L., Yurovsky, D., Cox, G., & Smith, L.B. (in prep). Memory representations as a window into selection mechanisms in bilinguals and monolinguals.

Vales, C.*, **Benitez, V.L.***, & Smith, L.B. (in prep). To focus or to ignore? Activation and inhibition processes in 4-year-old children. *Equal authorship contribution.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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 to be 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 involve in unexpected events better. Poster to be presented 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.

INVITED TALKS

2016 Developmental Brown Bag, University of Illinois – Urbana Champaign
2015 Department of Psychology, Rochester Institute of Technology
2015 Chican@ and Latin@ Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

TEACHING

Fall 2013 Instructor for Introduction to Psychology (~200 students), Indiana University
Fall 2010 Lab Instructor for Experimental Methods in Psychology, Two sections (~20 students each),
Indiana University

Guest lectures:

2015/16/17 *The cognitive consequences of bilingualism*, Racial and Ethnic Families in the U.S. (Human Development and Family Studies Course; 5 semesters), University of Wisconsin-Madison

Spring 2011 *Language learning and development*, Developmental Psychology Course, Indiana University

Teaching in the community:

2016 *The power and politics of bilingualism*. Workshop for the Xicanx Institute for Education and Self-Determination (20 Latino high-school youth), Madison, WI

2016 *Bilingualism and cognitive control*, Lecture for the Escalera Summer of STEM Club (10 Latino high-school youth), Centro Hispano, Madison, Wisconsin

2015/2016 *Brain power!* Workshop presented at the Latino Youth Summit (sessions of 15-20 Latino middle-school youth), Madison, Wisconsin

MENTORING

2015-2016 PASOS Mentoring Program (2 students), Chican@ & Latin@ Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Spring 2017 Independent Study in Psychology (1 student), University of Wisconsin-Madison

Fall 2016 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, 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 (Ad hoc) Journals: Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, Infancy, Language Learning, International Journal of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education, Applied Psycholinguistics, Neuropsychologia, Frontiers in Psychology

Reviewing (Ad hoc) Conferences: Cognitive Science Society Conference, Society for Research in Child Development Conference, Boston University Conference on Language Development, International Conference on Infant Studies

- 2014-2016 Diversity Committee, Department of Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 2015-2016 Finance Sub-Committee, Latino Caucus, Society for Research in Child Development
 Spring 2015 Co-editor of student journal: *Concientización*, Chican@ and Latin@ Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison
 2014 Conference judge for undergraduate student posters and graduate student talks in Psychology, Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science
 2012-2013 Treasurer, Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science, Indiana University Chapter
 2010-2012 Emissary for Graduate Student Diversity, Indiana University

Professional Development Panels: I have served on several professional development panels, organized to support students from underrepresented backgrounds, discussing topics including grant writing, how to succeed as a graduate student, applying for postdoctoral fellowships, and mentor/mentee relationships.

STEM Initiatives: I have participated in activities that engage young students in the community who are members of underrepresented groups in psychological science and other STEM fields, including arranging and conducting lab visits, presenting workshops and short lectures, and connecting with youth through STEM activities.

TRAINING/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 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

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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

OTHER SERVICE

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)
Fall 2009 Child Care volunteer, Centro Comunal Latino, Bloomington, IN