



**Code: Chen**

**APD 1210 RESEARCH PRACTICUM COURSE**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS 2025-26**

**FALL/WINTER**

**Name and Title:** Becky Chen, Professor

**Lab Website:** <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/chenlab>

**TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:** Language and literacy Development of French immersion Children

**NUMBER OF STUDENT PLACES AVAILABLE: 2**

**PRIMARY MODE OF RESEARCH PLACEMENT PARTICIPATION (circle one option and describe):**

IN PERSON

REMOTE (ONLINE)

HYBRID/FLEXIBLE

*Please describe: Our studies will be conducted in a hybrid format. Interviews, data entry, coding can be conducted virtually. While our weekly lab meeting is in-person, additional research meetings may be held virtually.*

**OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY:**

Our lab investigates language and literacy development of bilingual and multilingual children. Currently our research participants are French immersion children who are English-French bilinguals (or trilinguals who speak a different language at home) and Syrian refugee children who are Arabic-English bilinguals. Generally speaking, we have three major research directions. The first direction concerns language and literacy development of bilingual and multilingual children. We compare the performance of children who speak English as their first language (L1) and those who speak another language as the L1. The second direction is about cross-language transfer of language and literacy skills between the L1 and the second language (L2). The third direction focuses on early identification and early intervention for at-risk readers. We look for effective screening measures that can identify at-risk status in the L2 and design interventions to improve children's reading performance. We have worked with several school boards across Canada to set up board wide dyslexia screening programs by creating and administering screening measures and analyzing data collected from thousands of children. While our research is mostly quantitative, we also conduct parent and teacher interviews and surveys.



**DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION:**

As a research assistant, you will be asked to transcribe, code, and enter data. You may be responsible for conducting interviews or surveys. Training will be provided. Research assistants will have flexible schedules and work 8-10 hours per week.

Specifically, research assistants should have the following skills:

- Language skills: French or Arabic language proficiency is a strong asset but since we test in both L1 and L2, research assistants who only speak English will be able to fully participate in the projects.
- Interest and experience in working with school age children and their parents
- Basic computer skills (excel, software for quantitative or qualitative data analyses). Training will be provided.
- The ability to administer standardized and experimental measures. Training will be provided.
- Personal and communication skills as team work is required

**DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED SKILLS/BACKGROUND (OPTIONAL):**

*French and/or Arabic skills are preferred.*

**DAY AND TIMES OF LAB MEETINGS:**

- We have lab meetings once every two weeks, at a time that is convenient for most people. These meetings are in-person.
- You will work as part of a team under the direct and close supervision of a graduate student. The team will meet in-person or virtually on a regular basis, as needed.