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Initial Research Findings from Dissertation Research: An Exploration of how first and second grade children from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds use play to construct literacy learning in one elementary school

Over the course of my career as an educator, I have been engaged with supporting children in their literacy development through play. I have witnessed the power of play to motivate and engage learners as agents of their own learning. This presentation will present initial findings from my doctoral dissertation research. I am conducting a nine-month ethnographic study focused on the ways in which first and second grade children learning English as an additional language construct literacy in play environments. The purpose of the study is to better understand the ways children use their social, cultural, and linguistic resources in a play context in literacy learning. Additionally, the study is meant to explore teachers' conceptualisations of children's play related to literacy development. As a teacher and researcher, I am interested in the ways children participate in literacy practices in their play in third space environments. Through this study I hope to add to the literature that supports teachers in their understanding and uncovering of children's rich and complex funds of knowledge in language and literacy.