

VIRTUAL BROWNBAG LECTURE



Speaker:
Dr. Sarah Sok

October 15
Friday
10:30-11:30am

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Individual Differences in Incidental L2 Vocabulary Acquisition: The Case of Phonological Working Memory

Although much research attention has been given to incidental second language (L2) vocabulary acquisition, the moderating role of individual difference factors in incidental vocabulary learning conditions has not been sufficiently investigated. Therefore, not much is known about which characteristics or aptitudes of L2 learners allow them to acquire words more easily in conditions of incidental exposure, and conversely, which types of L2 learners do not perform as well under such conditions. This study investigated young L2 learners' incidental vocabulary acquisition from listening to stories and the moderating role of phonological working memory (PWM) using a pretest-posttest-delayed posttest design. The findings of the study indicate that individual differences in PWM play a significant role during incidental vocabulary learning through listening to stories only when no explicit instruction on target vocabulary is present; teacher explanations of target vocabulary during incidental learning seem to mitigate the influence of individual differences.

About the Speaker: Dr. Sarah Sok is Lecturer and Assistant Director of Graduate Curriculum in the Program in Global Languages & Communication at the University of California, Irvine. She holds an Ed.D. in Applied Linguistics (with a specialization in Second Language Acquisition) from Teachers College, Columbia University, as well as an M.A. in Applied Linguistics and a B.A. in Linguistics and Spanish from the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research interests include instructed second language acquisition, language testing, individual differences, and heritage language acquisition. Her works have appeared in journals such as the *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *International Journal of Listening*, *Language Teaching Research*, *Language Testing*, *Vigo International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, and *World Englishes*.