

Dr. Paula Winke & Xiaowan Zhang

Tuesday, October 16, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Erickson Hall: 133F

Third-grade Reading Assessment and Retention Theories and Policies in Michigan and in the USA

- Consequences for ELL Students, Families, and educators

Based on a theory that 3rd graders undergo a transition from learning-to-read to reading-to-learn (Chall, 2000), lawmakers in 16 states plus DC have enacted laws that require 3rd graders to pass a state 3rd-grade reading test or they cannot automatically progress to 4th grade. The effects of the laws have been explored in states where they have been in place the longest, such as Florida (Schwerdt, West, & Winters, 2017; Winters, 2012). However, researchers have not investigated how the laws have affected ELLs specifically.

Michigan's "Read by Grade 3" begins in 2020 (codified at Mich. Comp. Laws § 380.1280f (2016)). Dr. Winke and Xiaowan Zhang investigated 8,323 Michigan ELLs' M-STEP ELA and ACCESS reading test scores from spring 2016. In this presentation, they will show the data on a heatmapped-scatterplot and explain the varying, non-linear relationship between the two reading assessments. They will discuss what the results mean for Michigan ELL-retention-law interpretations. Moreover, if approved by the Michigan Department of Education (response forthcoming), they will also show how Michigan's "Read by Grade 3" law may potentially affect the ELL population in Michigan in 2020 compared to how it may potentially affect the non-ELL population.



Dr. Paula Winke and Xiaowan Zhang are researchers in the Second Language Studies Program in the MSU College of Arts and Letters. Dr. Winke is an associate professor and incoming editor of journal "Language Testing". Xiaowan is a doctoral student in Second Language Studies Program and has an MA in TESOL from the University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign.