**Language Development and Emergent Literacy for Diverse Learners Ages 3‑5**

EDUT 513, EDSE 557, EDUT 413, EDSE 457

Tuesdays 4:30 – 7:10 PM Robinson Hall A246

George Mason University, College of Education &Human Development,

Early Childhood Education Program

**Instructor:** Peg Griffin, Ph. D;

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Out of class meetings: arranged on request; Website: blackboard (open week 2)

**Course Description:**

This course provides students with an introduction to first and second language acquisition (speaking/signing, listening, reading, and writing) and the various contexts in which children develop language. Students will study the diversity of communication styles in families, communities, and cultures and they will explore the impact of being educated in a second language and/or negotiating schooling with a disability.

**Rationale:**

This course is offered as a required course in the Early Childhood Special Education program, a program designed to offer teacher licensure in Early Childhood Special Education and/or a Masters Degree in Special Education. It is also offered as one of the strands in the Unified Transformative Early Education Model in Early Childhood (UTEEM), an early childhood teacher training model providing an integrated approach to preparing teachers to work with diverse young children and their families.

**CEHD Syllabus Statements of Expectations:**

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See [www.gse.gmu.edu](http://www.gse.gmu.edu) for a listing of these dispositions.

Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12> for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See [www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc) or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC. ***Note:***To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu).

**Texts: (some reading links will be on the combined section class blackboard website)**

Burns, M. S., Griffin, P. & Snow, C. E. (1999). *Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children’s Reading Success.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press. (Required, available online)

Paley, V.G. 1997. *The Girl with the Brown Crayon*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press. (Required, available in Bookstore)

Genesee, F., Paradis, J., & Crago, M. B. (2004). *Dual language development & disorders.* Paul H. Brookes Publishing. (Required, available in Bookstore)

**Required selections from the following optional sources will be provided in electronic form**

Trawick-Smith, J. W. 2006. *Early Childhood Development: A Multicultural Perspective (4th edition)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall

Heath, Shirley Brice. 1983. *Ways with Words.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Dickinson, D. K. & Tabors, P. O. *Beginning Language with Literacy.* Baltimore MD: Brookes

Berko Gleason, J. & Ratner, N. (2009). *The Development of Language (7th edition)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Delpit, L. 1995/2006. *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom.* NY:New Press.

**Relationship to Program and Professional Standards**

**Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards**

1. Foundations
2. Development and Characteristics of Learners
3. Individual Learning Differences
4. Instructional Strategies
5. Learning Environments and Social Interactions
6. Language
7. Instructional Planning
8. Assessment
9. Professional and Ethical Practice
10. Collaboration

For descriptions of each of the above standards, go to <http://www.cec.sped.org/ps/perf_based_stds/standards.html#standards>.

**National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards**

1. Promoting Child Development and Learning
2. Building Family and Community Relationships
3. Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families
4. Teaching and Learning
5. Becoming a Professional

For descriptions of the above standards, go to <http://www.naeyc.org/faculty/> and click on NAEYC Standards for Professional Preparation.

#### Course Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of research supported contemporary views of language and literacy, especially the typical and atypical language and literacy developments among children from various backgrounds.
2. Students will demonstrate understanding of the developmental, social, cultural, affective, and cognitive factors that play a role in early language development, second (or additional) language acquisition, and children’s emerging proficiency with literacy.
3. Students will acquire skills and dispositions to apply current research on typical and atypical language development, additional language acquisition, home language, family communication, play, story-telling, and emergent literacy. This will include: the selection of children's literature, the design of meaningful and effective literacy activities reflecting and appreciating cultural, linguistic, and ability diversity, the creation and use of print and language rich environments for young children that include and develop productive family and community relations.
4. Students will be skilled at recognizing the language and literacy accomplishments of individual students as well as the difficulties any student may be encountering, and disposed to further the child’s best interests by communicating and cooperating with other professionals and with the family.

Nature of Course:

The course work includes lecture and discussion, small group activities, web based activities, observations, and instruction of young children. Active participation of all students is required. To engage in productive learning, students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session so as to question, answer, generate and explain ideas, and reflect on course material and activities. Students are expected to integrate course readings and class information into their writing in order to demonstrate knowledge of, skill with, and disposition to use content matter.

#### General Requirements:

1. I assume you will complete all readings assigned for the course. It is imperative that students keep timely with the readings and participate in class to make the most of the class for everyone.
2. Class attendance is important. If, due to an emergency, you will not be in class, you must email as soon as possible. You must suggest ways to compensate for the lost class learning opportunities – from your perspective and that of the rest of us.
3. You must use the class electronic blackboard discussion board to post the materials and to coordinate with the whole class or smaller groups. You should also use the digital drop-box from the course blackboard to submit papers, quizzes, and reports.
4. Pagers and cell phones should be on silent mode or turned off before class begins. Use of computers or phones for mail, messages, or web surfing during class should be restricted to matters relevant to the class that can be offered as a contribution to the rest of the class.
5. I expect that assignments will be turned in on time (usually, the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, since students occasionally have serious problems that prevent the completion of work, students should email or speak to me about it in a timely fashion so we can work out a solution.

**Written Assignment Expectations**

All written assignments will be evaluated for content and presentation as university-level writing.

1. Address the question or topic and task demands specifically. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document statements where appropriate
2. Avoid wordiness and redundancy. Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions. Do not refer to published works in a general way lest you imply that a whole book, chapter or article supports some specific point when in fact it does not; make specific the part of the work you are relying on.

It is probably best to use a word processor (and its spell checker) and to proofread carefully. It never hurts to have another person read your work so you can edit it more effectively. The American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition (APA) style is a useful guide. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the GMU library website. <http://libraries.gmu.edu> .

### Overview of course assignments beyond readings:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assignments** | **Percent of Final grade** |
| Preamble negotiation (appointed times during semester, done in pairs) | 10 |
| Instructional strategy project on literacy (choice of 3 assigned topics) | 20 |
| Quiz on literacy (in class: lobby & vote on questions) | 15 |
| Instructional strategy project on buddy for language (group) | 10 |
| Quiz on language (in class: lobby & vote on questions) | 15 |
| Essay on observation about aspect/acts of language | 20 |
| Ongoing blog about language & literacy with summary for families | 10 |
| Total | 100 |

## Specific Assignments:

### Preamble negotiation (appointed times during semester, done in teams)

Each class after the first will begin with a preamble topic to which students will respond. The preamble topic will draw on the reading assignments and prior class work. Each student will write 1/3 of a notebook page about the preamble and then volunteers will offer their responses to stimulate class discussion. The writings can be amended during the subsequent class but will be left so PG can review the understandings that are growing in the class. No grading will be done of the weekly preamble writing.

The points will be awarded as students work together in a team with one or two other students and the instructor in order to negotiate a preamble topic for the date assigned to their team. To participate, you must

* read the new assigned material early & review prior course work so that you can suggest a topic/prompt;
* post your first draft for a preamble topic/prompt by the Friday before the class;
* negotiate about the suggestions, posting at least four more well-thought-out responses by Monday at 8 PM.

Good preamble topics will take advantage of students’ recently acquired course knowledge & provoke them to express a choice, an opinion, a conclusion, or an example. The negotiation will take place on Blackboard or in e-mail.

Students who make at least the 5 required postings will receive at least 5 points; more points will be awarded depending on the care and cooperation shown in the responses as well as the quality of the ideas expressed. The teams and the date their preambles will be used are:

9/16 Berens, Amy & Goldman, Abby K. & PG

9/23 Bernhard, Lauren & Kapoor, Shelly & PG

9/30 Blair, Amanda & Laskowski, Allison & Westphal, April M. & PG

10/7 Brassard, Sabrina & Majano, Yamileth & Wicker, Courtney & PG

10/21 Clemons, Martha & Marshall-Lambert, Dede & Williams, Susan N. & PG

10/28 Coker, Sara L. & McArdle, Megan & Wright, Melissa S. & PG

11/4 ElSabbahy, Aelaa & Miller, Melissa L. & PG

11/11 Gates, Lyndsay E. & Odom, Tamela P. & PG

11/18 Papas, Maura O. & Pignatello, Lianne & PG

11/25 Pardo, Michelle M. & Sharifi, Yolanda & PG

12/2 Payne, Lara B. & Stapor, Crystal L. & PG

### Instructional strategy project on literacy (ISP1)

Each student will plan, implement and write a report on her use of a research based instructional strategy. There are three strategies that students will choose among:

1. Dialogic Reading (DR) – use the PEER and CROWD techniques with at least two children (ages 3-5); measure changes (understanding & engagement) before and after at least three sessions; report on fidelity of implementation, child differences/similarities and changes over time.
2. Scaffolded Writing (SW) – use the technique (function for writing, plan the message content, draw lines for message form, write (or scribble) on lines, read back message, fulfill function) with at least two children (ages 3-5); measure fidelity of implementation, changes (content, form, engagement) before and after at least 3 sessions; report on child differences/similarities and changes over time.
3. Classroom observation evaluation & student motivation (O&M) assessment to guide teacher change: use (or adapt and use) sections from the ELLCO (Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation) to depict at least two classrooms and administer (or adapt and administer) the Garfield student self-report measure to students in each class; analyze classroom and child similarities/differences and relations between classroom features and student motivation; report on the changes this type of evaluation and assessment can suggest to teachers.

* A preview will be given on September 9, a full introduction will be given on September 16, and some class time will be available for peer problem solving and instructor coaching on September 23, September 30, and October 7. Materials (background information, forms) for each strategy will be available on the class blackboard.
* Each student will write an individual report for this project.
  + For choices 1 and 2, students will plan, implement, and analyze separately but will discuss ideas and perhaps share materials with others doing the same project.
  + For choice 3, two students will work together to plan, implement, and analyze the data (as well as discussing ideas and perhaps sharing materials with others doing the same project) but each student will write separate reports.
* During class on September 16, the project assignments will be made.
  + First, at least four and no more than 10 students will be accepted to do O & M.
  + Then the remaining 22-26 students will draw a number from a hat to sign up for projects 1 (DR) or 2 (SW). Measures will be taken to insure that at least 8 students do each project.
* Reports will be posted on blackboard and jigsaw groups will be convened so that students can learn about the strategies they were not involved with. The reports are due on October 21.

### Quiz on literacy (in class: lobby & vote on questions)

An in-class quiz (some short answer, one essay question) taking 50 minutes of class time, based on class readings and discussion. The quiz will be administered on October 21.

### Instructional strategy project on buddy system for language

Groups of no more than six students and no less than three students will plan, implement and collaborate to write a report the of a research based instructional strategy shown to increase participation in peer conversations by children seldom so engaged in a classroom.

The group will

* identify a population of 3-5 year olds among which there are some children who are seldom engaged in productive interactions with other children;
* identify a student in need of more engagement and a peer or near peer who can be taught to participate as a buddy;
* take a baseline measure of engagement by the student in need of more engagement;
* teach the other student to learn about being a buddy partner;
* help the buddies to implement the intervention;
* take measures during of 5 sessions;
* analyze and evaluate the fidelity and effectiveness of this use of the buddy system;
* write a report on the buddy system use and its potential for other uses.

An introduction will be given on October 28; some class time will be available for peer problem solving and instructor coaching on November 11, 18. Materials (background information, forms) for the technique will be available on the class blackboard. The report is due on blackboard by December 2.

### Quiz on language (in class: lobby & vote on questions)

An in-class quiz (some short answer, at least one essay question) taking 70 minutes of class time, based on class readings and discussion. The quiz will be administered on December 9.

### Essay on observation about aspect/acts of language

Each student will write an essay describing the language used by a three to five year old child in an event. Following are guidelines:

* Include the child & at least one other person (you, another adult, another child/children);
* The interaction should last at least 10 minutes;
* Identify the context of the event -- is it unusual or a routine (for example: dramatic play, toy play, literacy, a field trip, a meal, transition time or center time in school), was it planned for the essay or serendipitous, what is the location, who are the people, what is the mood, what preceded and followed it, etc.
* Record it electronically (audio or video), or in detailed field notes, or with an instrument;
* Report using the concepts and terms in class readings and discussion of the aspects and acts of language, giving specific examples of the categories you use, providing summaries concerning what language was used/almost used/misused; append a written form (for example a transcript) of at least part of the raw record the interaction.

In place of the November 4 class, preparation for the essay will begin in a distance learning discussion board:

* It is intended to refine practical understanding of the acts and aspects of language represented by the intersecting language prisms used in class and to prepare you for the deeper discussion in the classes to follow;
* It can sharpen your use of concepts and terms during observation and analysis of interaction and while you are writing the essay about it;
* A grid of the potential different examples of language will be provided;
* Students and the instructor will produce apt examples of the language that would fit in each cell in the grid;
* Between October 29 and November 6, you will be expected to post 4 initiations, 4 responses to others, 4 responses to responses on the blackboard;
* Special attention will be given to meta-control acts and the issues of language and culture diversity that may be confused with misuse or failure to use an aspect of language or to perform an act of language when expected.

At the end of November, students will be invited to brainstorm about the kinds of introduction and conclusion the essay could have and to identify some of the more general topics that could be addressed (about benchmarks, diversity among children, intentional/incidental/practice potentials in classrooms) and others the work raises for you as you engage in it.

### Ongoing blog about language & literacy with summary for families

In the blog category (“[Blogs by Fall 2008 students of Language & Literacy among 3-5 yr olds](http://gmu.blackboard.com/webct/editAreaView.dowebct?action=edit&areaid=193390596001&lcid=59855938001&homePage=true&exp=_193390596001_196091493001)”) of discussions on blackboard for this course, there's a separate topic for each student. In her blog, each student will post at least once a week--updating what she knows, wants to know, or have learned about language & literacy in the week past. Everyone can read, comment, question within everyone else's blog space. Everyone can respond to comments in her own or anyone else's blog space! At semester's end, each student can draw on blogs to make a newsletter or poster to help families & community to understand more about language and literacy among 3-5 year olds.

**Tentative Schedule: details to follow**

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| **Date** | **Topic** | | **Readings Due** |
| Aug 25 | Course overview: Main ideas, Resources, Tasks | |  |
| Sept 2 | Literacy preamble: ideas & alternate icons for early literacy (Good Night Moon) | | SOR 1-14 |
| Sept 9 | Literacy up to 4 especially: Concepts of print, Letter knowledge, Phonological awareness, Socio-dramatic play (Moo, Baa, La la la) | | SOR 15-60 |
| Sept 16 | Literacy up to 5: Read alouds, Estimated writing; Resource examples; K author study year; Begin Instructional Strategy Project 1 (ISP1) (Blue & Yellow, Frederick) | | Paley 1-37; SOR 61-85 |
| Sept 23 | Literacy: Comprehension (meta-cognitive monitor, reader response changes); Motivation & engagement; Diversity of purpose & form; Vocabulary (depth, breadth, speed access)  (Animals, Letters, Are you a Spider) [some class time ISP1 work] | | Paley 38-99 |
| Sept 30 | Literacy foundations: Conversations (& in play); Environment; Printed word identifications; Teaching cycle: plan/do/assess/ evaluate/modify/repeat (Poky Puppy, Sagwa) [ISP1 work] | | SOR 86-107, 120-124 (skim 108- 119) |
| Oct 7 | Literacy: Motivation & engagement; Fluency; Team around teachers (Grandfather Tang, Numbers) [ISP1 work] | | SOR 127-145 |
| Oct 14: No Class: Monday classes meet on Tuesday | | | |
| Oct 21 | Literacy wrap up: Table of big ideas by activities; Pillar/tree/braid review; strategy jigsaw | Quiz;  ISP1 due | |
| Oct 28 | Language overview: acts & aspects of language; dual language development; atypical language development; begin ISP2 | DLD&D: 3-59; Trawick: 150-159;  *optional: B-G& R: 18-24; 291; 315-368* | |
| Nov 4 (10/29-11/6) | Prepare for observation & essay: Examples of child language aspects & acts (other vs. meta-control acts)[distance learning discussion] | Heath; DLD&D: 117-151; Trawick: 403-404, 380-381; *optional: B-G& R: 125-130; 209* | |
| Nov 11 | Language: Vocabulary; Functions: pragmatics & rhetoric [class time ISP2 work]; languages & culture diversity | T,B&W; DLD&D: 63-88; Trawick: 272-275; 399-401; 277-283; 404-408; *optional: B-G& R: 108-11; 121-125* | |
| Nov 18 | Language Structure: Morphology & Syntax; dialect, additional languages & cultures [ISP2 work] | DLD&D: 91-114; Trawick: 276-277; 401-403 *optional: B-G& R: 147-150; 158-163* | |
| Nov 25 | Language Structure: Phonology; Assessment Language Benchmarks: various aspects; various sources; brainstorm for essay | DLD&D: 155-187; Trawick: 268-272; 396-399 *optional: B-G& R: 58-67; 88-89; 366-368* | |
| Dec 2 | Language Structure: syntax & semantics; Benchmarks & interventions | DLD&D: 193-212; Trawick 396-411 Instructional Strategy Project 2 due *optional: B-G& R: 164-177; 315-366* | |
| Dec 9 | Wrap-up | Quiz; observation essay due by date/time of scheduled exam | |