

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENT LITERACY FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS AGES 3-5
EDUT 413/513, SECTION 5U1 (3 CREDITS), FALL 2005

Early Childhood UTEEM Program

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

513 Language Development and Emergent Literacy for Diverse Learners, Ages 3-5 (3:3:0).

Prerequisite: Admission to the UTEEM program or permission of the instructor. This course provides students with an understanding of first and second language acquisition and its application in the various contexts in which children develop. Students explore the impact of disability and second language acquisition and better understand the inter-relationship of speaking, listening, and writing. They will also gain an understanding of diversity of communication styles in families, communities, and cultures.

RATIONALE

This course is offered as one of the strands in the Early Childhood UTEEM (UTEEM) program, an early childhood teacher preparation model providing an integrated approach to preparing teachers to work with diverse young children and their families. Teachers are prepared to work with children with diverse learning needs in a variety of inclusive community settings. This strand is offered in conjunction with three other courses and linked to a full-time field placement with diverse young children. Students participating in this course are enrolled full time in the UTEEM program.

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 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 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.

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_std/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 an understanding of typical and atypical language development in diverse young children.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the developmental, social, cultural, affective, and cognitive factors that play a role in early language development.
3. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the various factors that play a role in first and second language acquisition.
4. Students will apply current research on typical and atypical language development, second language acquisition, home language, family communication, play, story telling, and emergent literacy to various settings.
5. Students will select children's literature and design meaningful literacy activities which reflect and appreciate cultural, linguistic, and ability diversity.
6. Students will create and promote a print rich environment for diverse young children.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This course utilizes a seminar format. Students attend each class for three to six hours. Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session so as to engage in active dialogue and sharing of ideas. Activities will include small group discussions and presentations, whole class sharing, and reflection through journaling and quick writes. Students are expected to utilize their course readings during class sessions to respond to thought questions and engage in productive learning. Students are expected to integrate course readings and class information into their written assignments to demonstrate knowledge of content matter.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Ballenger, C. (1999). *Teaching other people's children: Literacy and learning in a bilingual classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Burns, M. S., Griffin, P., & Snow, C. E. (2000). *Starting out right: A guide to promoting children's reading success*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. [also used in EDUT 613]

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

OPTIONAL BOOKS

Berko Gleason, J. (2004). *The development of language (6th ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities pertaining to language and literacy development, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.
2. Class attendance is important. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message.
3. The university requires that all pagers and cell phones be turned off before class begins.
4. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that graduate students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to the instructor in a timely fashion.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation as graduate-level writing. The American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the GMU library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/>.

Expectations

Students will

1. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
2. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

PARTICIPATION

Because active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning, preparation for and participation in in-class activities will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Readings and outside preparation for in-class activities are completed prior to class as is evidenced by the ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts as well as participate fully in related activities.
- Active involvement in in-class learning experiences is apparent as is evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3) completing written work related to the activities, and (4) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
- Critical reflective thinking is apparent through in-class written reflections and activities.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Students will write and share their language and literacy autobiography. They will gather their language and literacy story by talking with family members and thinking back on their experiences with language and literacy throughout their childhood and adolescence and into their adulthood. They will also examine their current use of language and literacy and the influence their language and literacy upbringing has on them today. The types of stories and information that might be included in the autobiography will be brainstormed in class. After completing the autobiography, students will share highlights from their story with a small group of classmates.

Students will consult scoring guide for evaluation criteria.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY REFLECTIONS

Throughout the internship, students will write a series of three language and literacy reflections. Students will e-mail each reflection to the instructor. Reflections may be written in the body of the e-mail or sent as an attachment.

Reflection 1: Students will examine their current use of language and literacy as they interact with others, as they teach in their internship, and as they go on home visits. They will discuss the assumptions they have about children and families whose languages, literacy practices, and cultures might be different from their own. They will reflect on how these assumptions might affect their teaching practices.

Reflection 2: Students will discuss the values and beliefs that are the basis of the instructional choices they make in their internships. They will explore how their values and beliefs align with or differ from the families with whom they work. They will reflect on how these values and beliefs might affect their teaching practices.

Reflection 3: At the end of the internship, students will write a reflection about language and literacy within their classroom. This reflection will include their thoughts on how their internship contributed to their understanding of children's language and literacy development and how their formal and informal reflections on language and literacy influenced their teaching practices.

Students will consult scoring guide for evaluation criteria.

INQUIRY INTO RESEARCH-BASED TEACHING PRACTICES

Students will work with a partner or partners to research a teaching practice that enhances the language and literacy development of culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse preschool children. Specific topics of inquiry will be brainstormed in class. Once topics are selected, students will develop a list of questions to guide their inquiry. They will use these questions to conduct a library search for research on the selected topic.

Students will use the findings from their research to develop a written product that will be used to share the information with their classmates. The product might be, for example, a website, a PowerPoint presentation, a brochure or handbook, letters or memos, or a research brief.

Students will prepare a 15- to 20-minute presentation that shares pertinent information about the research-based practice and engages classmates in a hands-on experience.

Students will consult scoring guide for evaluation criteria.

FAMILY LANGUAGE AND LITERACY HANDBOOK

Students will compile a language and literacy handbook that can be used by families as a resource for (a) understanding the complex nature of preschool children's language and literacy development and (b) materials and activities that can enhance their own children's language and literacy development. The handbook will be a synthesis of students' understanding of the topics explored throughout the semester. The broad categories will include the following: (a) the influence of family and culture on language and literacy development; (b) the structure of language; (c) typical and atypical language development, including first, simultaneous, and second language acquisition; (d) emergent literacy, including reading and writing development; (e) research-based practices that enhance language and literacy development, including practices at school and in the home and community. In addition, students will include at least five activities, five children's books, and five technology-based resources (e.g., videos, songs, websites, etc.) that might be of interest to children and their families.

Students may create a handbook or may develop a website. They will use APA style to format the written documents and will include appropriate reference citations. Because this is a synthesis of their knowledge, they will use a variety of sources to support the ideas and concepts shared. Bibliographical information for the children's books and technology-based resources will also be included.

Students will meet in small groups to share their handbooks. Each student will have approximately 15 minutes to discuss the activities, books, and technology-based resources included in the handbook.

Students will consult scoring guide for evaluation criteria.

OVERVIEW OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignments	Due Dates	Points	
		413	513
Language and Literacy Autobiography	September 21	20	15
Inquiry Into Research-Based Practices	October 19	35	30
Language and Literacy Reflections	Oct. 24 – Nov. 21	0	15
Family Literacy Handbook	December 14	35	30
Participation	Ongoing	10	10
TOTAL		100	

GRADING SCALE	
A	93 – 100
A-	90 – 92
B+	88 – 89
B	80 – 87
C	75 – 79

CLASS SCHEDULE

DATE	CLASS TOPICS	READINGS* & ASSIGNMENTS DUE
August 30 & 31 Tuesday & Wednesday	Preparing to Teach Diverse Young Children	
September 1 Thursday 9:00 – 11:30 Robinson A 349	Foundations of Language and Literacy Development in Diverse Children, Ages 3 – 5	
September 7 Wednesday 9:00 – 4:00 Robinson A 349	Language and Culture Language and Cognition Structure of Language	Genesee et al.: Chapters 1 – 3 Heath: Chapter 5 Vukelich et al.: Chapter 2 <i>Bring a favorite, familiar children's book</i>
September 21 Wednesday 9:00 – 4:00 Robinson A 349	Language Development: First, Simultaneous, and Second Language Acquisition <i>Reach Out and Read: Making Books Part of a Healthy Childhood</i> Speaker: Joan Wabschall, Program Coordinator	Genesee et al.: Chapters 4 – 7 Vukelich et al.: Chapter 3 Language & Literacy Autobiography
October 5 Wednesday 9:00 – 4:00 Robinson A 349	Atypical Language Development Emergent Literacy <i>Raising Children in a Bilingual Home</i> Speaker: Kim Amenabar, Parent and UTEEM Family Liaison	Burns et al.: Pages 1 – 60 Genesee et al.: Chapter 8 Ratner Chapter in Berko Gleason <i>Bring a children's book that is new to you</i>
October 19 9:00 – 4:00 Robinson A 349	Teaching Practices That Enhance Language and Literacy Development <i>Dorothea</i> Speaker: Laura Gerke, Parent & FCPS Cluster II Advisory Committee for Students With Disabilities Representative	Ballenger: All Neuman & Roskos (2005) Article Inquiry Into Research-Based Teaching Practices
October 24 – November 21	<i>Full-Time Internship</i>	E-Mail Reflections to jkidd@gmu.edu
December 6 Tuesday 9:00 – 4:00 Robinson A 349	Creating an Environment That Enhances Language and Literacy Development Building Relationships With Families	Bardige & Segal: Chapter 12 Briody & McGarry (2005) Article <i>Bring a children's book that appropriately represents diversity</i>
December 14 Wednesday 9:00 – 12:00 Robinson A 349	Share Family Literacy Handbooks, Resources, and Activities	Family Literacy Handbook

*Additional readings may be provided as relevant.