

**UTEEM Early Childhood Program  
George Mason University  
Fairfax, VA 22303**

---

**Language Development of Diverse Young Learners, Birth to Age Three:  
*Language Acquisition, Emergent Literacy, and Communication*  
EDUT 523/423, Section 5U1 (3 credits)  
Spring 2003  
Room Robinson A, 412**

---

**INSTRUCTOR:** Jodi Whiteman, M.Ed.  
Office Hours: Before and  
after class and by appointment

Phone Number: (703)980-0682  
E-Mail: [jodi@steppingstones-edu.com](mailto:jodi@steppingstones-edu.com)

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed). Washington, DC: Author.

Harding, E. & Riley, P. (1986). *The bilingual family*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hart, B. & Risley, T. (1995). *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experiences of Young American Children*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Heath, Shirley Brice. (1996). *Way with words*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Huilt, L. & Howard, M. (2002). *Born to talk*. Needham Heights, MA: Ally & Bacon.

Tabor, Patton O. (1997). *One Child, Two Languages*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Selected Readings

An assortment of quality children's literature

**NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY**

This course utilizes a seminar format. Students attend each class for six hours. Students are expected to complete all 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.

**Note:** This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, need, or special circumstance, please inform your instructor as soon as possible.

## **COURSE PURPOSE**

This course is offered as one of the strands in the UTEEM Early Childhood program, an integrated approach to preparing teachers to work with culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children and their families. Teachers are prepared to work with infants and toddlers with diverse learning needs in a variety of inclusive settings. This strand is offered in conjunction with three other courses and is linked to a full-time field placement with diverse infants and toddlers. Students participating in this course are enrolled full time in the UTEEM program.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the completion of this strand, students will

1. Discuss the major patterns of early language development in terms of each of the five components of language as well as individual and cultural differences that may be exhibited in infants and toddlers;
2. Discuss the developmental, social, cultural, affective, and cognitive factors that play a role in early first and second language acquisition;
3. Apply current research on early first and second language acquisition, including the research on language and cognition, language and culture, language disorders and communication deficits, adult-child interaction, and culture/environment;
4. Support the early communication efforts of infants and toddlers in a culturally and developmentally responsive manner; and
5. Design and implement varied communication activities that support the interaction between diverse infants and toddlers and their families.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES/STANDARDS**

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

- Understanding of speech and language development and intervention methods, including the effects of disabling and at-risk conditions on young children

### **CHILD AND FAMILY**

- The ability to understand children in the context of family, culture, and community

### **READING/LITERATURE**

- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of the family in developing literacy
- Demonstrate the ability to appreciate the written word and the awareness of the printed language and writing system
- Develop an understanding of the linguistic, sociological, cultural, cognitive, and psychological basis of the reading process
- Be proficient in strategies to increase vocabulary
- Demonstrate the ability to foster the appreciation of a variety of literature
- Understand the importance of promoting independent reading and reading reflectively by selecting quality literature, including fiction and nonfiction, at appropriate reading levels

### ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

- Knowledge of the effects of socio-cultural variable in the instructional setting
- Knowledge of general linguistics and English linguistics
- Proficiency in spoken and written English
- Understanding of and proficiency in grammar, usage, and mechanics and their integration in writing

### ORAL COMMUNICATION

- Be proficient in the knowledge, skills, and processes necessary for teaching oral language (including listening and speaking)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the unique needs of students with language differences and delays
- Demonstrate the ability to promote creative thinking and expression, as through storytelling, drama, choral/oral reading, etc.

### REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Participation	ongoing	10
In Class Learning Logs	ongoing	10
Creating a Language and Literacy Rich Environment <b>PART I</b>		5
<b>PART II</b>	March 31	15
Video, Transcription, and Language Analysis <b>PART I</b>	February 25	10
<b>PART II</b>	March 17	15
Family Language and Literacy Project and Presentation	April 28	35

### Grading Scale

A+: 97-100   A: 94-97   A-: 91-94   B+: 88-91   B: 85-88   B-: 82-85   C: 70-82   F: Below 70

### 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 infant and toddler language and literacy development, it is imperative that you keep up with the readings and participate in class.
2. Class attendance is important. If, due to an emergency, you will not be in class, call the instructor before class and leave a message.
3. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time at 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 dilemma arises, please speak to the instructor in a timely fashion.

## GUIDELINES FOR 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 are completed prior to class as is evidenced by the ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts.
- Outside preparation for in-class activities is apparent as is evidenced by materials brought to class and the ability to 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.

## GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation as graduate-level writing. The American Psychological Association (APA) style (5<sup>th</sup> edition) 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 you are not confident of your own ability to catch errors, have another person proofread your work. When in doubt, 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

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.

*The University Writing Center (Robinson A114) 703-993-1200 is a free writing resource open to everyone involved in the George Mason community, including graduate students. The Writing Center offers individual, group, and online tutoring sessions in a comfortable, supportive atmosphere. GMU students may register for the On-Line Writing Lab (OWL), the distance arm of the Writing Center that allows students to submit papers electronically. Access to a writing tutor, plus assistance with writing, editing, and composition are available at <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>.*

**ONLINE LIBRARY RESOURCES** (Information from *Full Text*, a publication of the library)

The University Libraries has streamlined its website, <http://library.gmu.edu>. The website now provides quicker and easier access to the most frequently used resources and information.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### LANGUAGE SAMPLE AND ANALYSIS

#### ASSIGNMENT

Videotape two segments involving an infant/toddler. One segment includes you interacting with an infant/toddler during play and another involves the child interacting with other children in a natural context. Transcribe the tape, and analyze both interactions. **Part I** involves a three to four page analysis of your interactions with child. **Part II** is a four to five-page analysis of the language sample of your focus child interacting with other children. Both video segments can be used to analyze the child's language development.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this assignment is to provide an opportunity for you to collect, transcribe, and analyze spontaneous language samples of an infant or toddler in a natural communicative context and to gain a better understanding of your role and style when you interact with very young children.

#### FORMAT

Videotape **(a)** yourself interacting with an infant/toddler during play and **(b)** videotape your focus child with other children in a natural setting, **(c)** transcribe the interactions, and **(d)** submit two separate analyses of your findings.

**For Part I**, videotape yourself interacting with an infant/toddler during play for approximately 10 minutes. Transcribe your interaction. While analyzing, concentrate on examining your preferred language use, communicative style, questioning techniques, tone, interaction role, physical/nonverbal communication, and communicative turn taking. Give specific examples from your sample to support your statements. As part of your three-four page analysis include a section addressing what you learned about yourself, adult-child communication and play, and the areas of future professional growth identified as a result of transcribing and analyzing your interactions with the child. Use APA style, link understanding to readings, and cite your references.

#### CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

1. Ten minute **VHS** videotape of a child/adult interaction submitted with written work. **1**
2. Transcription accurately conveys vocalizations and gestures of both parties. **3**
3. The analysis is accurate and is supported by the language sample and appropriate references. **5**
4. The paper is meets the guidelines outlined above and follows APA guidelines. **1**

**For Part II**, videotape your focus child interacting with other children for a total of approximately 10 to 15 minutes (may include more than one setting). Maintain anecdotal records of the situation around the time of the videotaping. These records should include information such as (a) the date, time, and setting; (b) the people present at the time of data collection; and (c) background information on the child that may affect the language sample (e.g., child's mood, home language/dialect, gender, racial and ethnic variables, etc.). Submit the **VHS** videotape with your transcription and written analysis.

- For Part II, transcribe your language sample. Submit transcriptions of (a) the vocalizations and gestures, (b) the possible intent of the communication, and (c) the responses of the child's communicative partner(s).
- For Part II, analyze the language sample of the child and submit a four-to-five-page analysis of your data written in APA style and using reference citations. Your analysis should include specific examples from the language sample to support your conclusions and should link your findings to the readings. The analysis should include the following:
  - Background information necessary to understanding the context, children, and any other factors that might affect the analysis.
  - An analysis of your focus child's patterns of language development. Present evidence of the child's knowledge of linguistic rules or principles (i.e., pragmatic, semantics, syntax, morphology, and phonology) that underlie the verbal and non-verbal behavior.
  - An analysis of the functions of language most commonly used by the child. Present evidence to support your conclusions and link your findings to your readings.
  - A description of linguistic elements that may be in the child's repertoire but were not observed during your language sample.
  - Reflections on what you learned from the sample analysis process and what else you may need to explore to gain a better understanding of the child's language development.

#### **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

1. Ten to 15 minute **VHS** videotape of your focus child interacting with other children (may include more than one setting) submitted with written work. 2
2. Transcriptions accurately convey the vocalizations and gestures of the child and clearly describe the possible intent of the communication as well as the response of the child's communicative partner(s). 4
3. The analysis is accurate and is supported by evidence from the language sample and is clearly linked to appropriate references. It is written in a clear and professional manner, with evidence of thoughtful organization and careful editing. 6
4. Both papers meet the guidelines outlined above and follow APA guidelines. 3

### **CREATING A LANGUAGE AND LITERACY RICH ENVIRONMENT**

#### **ASSIGNMENT**

Analyze and reflect on the language and literacy practices that exist at your internship site. Use your observations and reflections to design your own language and literacy rich environment, as if you are the provider at that site.

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this assignment is to (1) observe, analyze, synthesize and reflect on language and literacy practices that occur in various infant and toddler settings and (2) to take into consideration the culture, interests, families, etc. of the children at your site and (3) to identify the teachers role and the context and materials that would enable you to create a language and literacy rich environment setting.

## **PART I**

Describe your internship environment, focusing solely on the promotion of language and literacy. Consider the role of the teacher, teacher/child interactions, materials, context, and family involvement. Analyze (not criticize) based on your observations, class discussions and readings. Type up a description and reflection of your observations (no more than 4 pages). We will have a round table discussion in class.

## **PART II**

Throughout your internship experiences continue to observe, analyze and reflect on the promotion language and literacy at your site. Use these observations to design your own language and literacy environment for that site (as if you were the provider). What does it look like? What are some of the language and literacy rich practices that are occurring? How are you/the providers choosing materials? How are you/providers individualizing for linguistically and ability diverse infants, toddler and their families? Make sure to note family involvement, teacher's role, teacher-child interactions, the context in which your observations are taking place, and the materials that would enable you to create a language and literacy rich environment setting. How is early language and literacy linked to every component of the day? Link your understandings to reading and cite you references. Each student will share briefly in class.

## **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

1. The paper has evidence that the student went through a process: observation, analyze, and reflection. 10
2. The student shows an understanding of the teacher's role, materials, context, etc. (how to promote language and literacy in infants and toddlers). 10
3. The paper is written clearly and supported by appropriate references. 5

## **IN CLASS LEARNING LOGS**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the learning log is to:

1. provide an opportunity to record observations, thoughts, and reactions;
2. use writing as a tool for learning; and
3. encourage you to reflect upon your readings, observations and learning.

### **FORMAT**

The learning log will consist of selected in-class activities. All learning log assignments should be submitted in a *blue folder with brads*. Each learning log assignment will be given at the beginning of each class. Students will have 15 minutes to complete the learning log. A brief group discussion will occur upon completion of each learning log. All learning log assignments will be turned in using the blue folder at the end of every class.

### **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

1. The entries meet the guidelines provided for each activity. 5
2. The individual's thoughts, reactions, and ideas are evident in the entries. 5

## **FAMILY LANGUAGE & LITERACY PROJECT**

### **ASSIGNMENT**

Create a project that can be shared with families and conveys your understanding and beliefs about language and literacy development in diverse infants and toddlers. Include (a) research based beliefs and understanding about and practices related to typical and atypical language development, including second language acquisition, (b) a list of children's literature that can be shared with families, and (c) a collection of culturally and developmentally appropriate activities that are written in a family-friendly manner and can be shared with diverse families.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this assignment is to (a) synthesize the information addressed throughout the semester and share it in a family-friendly manner, (b) create a database of children's literature, and (c) develop language and literacy experiences for infants and toddlers and their families that are designed to support and enrich language and literacy development as well as adult-child interactions.

### **FORMAT**

**PART I:** The first section of the family literacy project will include **a paper** that synthesizes important concepts about language development in infants and toddlers. The paper will include your view of language development, including early first and second language acquisition patterns, atypical language development, and the role of family and culture. The body of the paper should be 5 to 7 pages and should be written using APA guidelines. The final project should contain:

1. a cover page;
2. an introduction that presents the major points to be developed;
3. a theoretical framework that synthesizes information gathered and develops the main concepts addressed throughout the semester;
4. a conclusion that restates the essential points;
5. reference citations in the text; and
6. a reference list.

The texts used in the infant and toddler courses this semester will be the main sources used to support the concepts developed in the theoretical framework. However, it may be necessary to gather further information from scholarly journals or books.

**PART II:** Create a database of at least 10 books that are appropriate for infants and toddlers. The database should include the bibliographic information (title, author, copyright date, city of publication, and publisher) and a brief, family-friendly description of each book.

**PART III:** Describe at least five activities that support language development in the home and community. These activities should:

- provide a vehicle for authentic, meaningful communication between infant and toddlers, their families, and their communities;
- be structured flexibly enough to implement with various developmental levels, cultural backgrounds, and linguistic environments;
- be creative yet practical;
- be written in a family-friendly manner; and
- include a brief rationale for activity

**Culminating Activity:** Share your project with classmates and demonstrate one of your activities. The demonstration of the activity should be approximately five minutes in length and should include your rationale for including it in the family literacy project and an explanation of how it supports language and literacy development in a culturally and developmentally appropriate manner. Create a one-page handout to distribute to the class. Submit the one-page handout with your family literacy project.

#### **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

1. The written presentation of beliefs and practices reveals an accurate understanding of early language and literacy development, use, and practices and provides appropriate links between theory and practice. The information is explained, synthesized, presented in a clear/professional manner that show evidence of careful organization and editing, and cited in an appropriate manner. 15
2. The database of children's literature includes the information outlined above. The descriptions are written in a family-friendly manner and include sufficient information. 5
3. The family activities are creative, practical, and flexible enough to meet the diverse needs of the children and their families, are written in a family-friendly manner, and contain sufficient detail. 5
4. The family literacy project and selected activity are shared with classmates in a clear and concise manner and follow the guidelines outlined above. 5
5. The one-page handout is prepared in a professional manner and provides sufficient detail. 5

## CLASS SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPICS	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS
Jan. 21-23	Semester Overview Cross Cultural Communication	Assigned readings NCBI workshop
Jan. 28	Course Overview Communication Style & Culture Components of Language Language Acquisition Theories	Hulit & Howard: Chapters 1 & 2 Heath: Review of Chapters 3 & 4 (focus on the follow components: gender, communication, child-rearing, involvement of the community/family)  <b>In-class learning log #1</b>
Feb. 9	Language and Cognition Language Development in Diverse Infants and Toddlers Adult-Child Interactions in Language	Harding & Riley: Chapter 1 Hulit & Howard: Chapter 3 & 4 From Neurons to Neighborhoods: Chapter 6 (handout) <b>In-class learning log #2</b> <b>Analysis and Application- PART I</b>
Feb. 25	Phonological Development  Atypical Speech/ Language Development: Delays & Disorders  <i>Guest Speaker- Diane Hoffower, CCC/SLP</i>	Hulit and Howard: Chapter 7 & 9 Prizant, Robert & Wetherby (1993) article Before the ABC's – Zero to Three publication  <b>Language Sample and Analysis- PART I</b> <b>In-class learning log #3</b>
March 7	Spring Break	Note: If your site takes a spring break on a different date, then you will report to your site and take your spring break when your site does.
March 17	Language and Culture of Care: Linguistic Continuity vs. Discontinuity  Second-Language Acquisition: Infant and Toddler Bilingualism  <i>Guest Speaker- Kim Amenabar</i>	Sanchez & Thorp (1998) article NAEYC Position Statement (1996) article Linguistic Diversity and Early Literacy- Zero to Three publication Harding & Riley: Chapters 2-5 Zero to Three article <b>Language Sample and Analysis- PART II</b>
March 31	Caregiver-Child Interaction Reading with Infants and Toddlers Selecting Culturally and Developmentally Appropriate Activities and Materials Supporting Home Language and Culture  <i>Guest Speaker- Susan Goettl, Fairfax County EHS/HS</i>	Green & Kupetz (1997) article Heath: Chapter 5 Harding & Riley: All Case Studies (pg. 83-114)  <b>In-class learning log #4</b> <b>Application Synthesis</b>
April 28	Share and Reflect  <i>Guest Speaker- Carol Osborn, Zero to Three</i>	<b>In-class learning log # 5</b> <b>Family Language &amp; Literacy Handbook</b>