

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development

EDUT 523 LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF DIVERSE YOUNG LEARNERS, BIRTH TO AGE THREE
Language Acquisition, Emergent Literacy, and Communication

Early Childhood UTEEM—Master of Education Program
Wednesdays, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. in Robinson A 349
Spring 2005, Section 5U1 (3 credits)

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DESCRIPTION

This course provides students with an understanding of early language development in terms of each of the five major components of language. Speech, language, and communication will be discussed, particularly in terms of its interrelatedness with cognitive and socio-cultural development. The importance of adult-child interaction and the impact of bilingualism, cultural diversity, cognitive ability, and language disorder will also be explored. Students will further their understanding of diversity of communication styles in families, communities, and cultures.

RATIONALE

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 community 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.

GSE SYLLABUS STATEMENTS OF EXPECTATIONS

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) 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.

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

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 communicative activities that support the interaction between diverse infants and toddlers and their families.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

This course uses a seminar format based on discussion of class topics and readings as well as related experiences and assignments from the classroom-based practicum. Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session and to be prepared to engage in active dialogue and sharing of ideas. Activities will include small group discussions, presentations, whole class sharing, and reflection.

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, 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, students should contact 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 may occasionally have serious circumstances arise that prevent the completion of work by the assigned due date. If such a dilemma arises, please speak to the instructor in a timely fashion.

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, 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 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.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Harding-Esch, E., & Riley, P. (2003). *The bilingual family: A handbook for parents* (2nd ed.). United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Hulit, L. M., & Howard, M. R. (2002). *Born to talk: An introduction to speech and language development* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

REQUIRED ARTICLES

Required articles are listed in the course schedule and can be accessed through e-reserves at <http://oscr.gmu.edu>. Click on search electronic reserve at the top of the page. Select EDUT 523 section 501 or Kidd, Julie. Enter the password.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Participation	Ongoing	10
Calendar Activities	February 16	5
Children's Literature Database and Book Talk	March 2	15
Language Sample and Analysis	March 23	25
Language Delays and Disorders Research Brief Presentation	April 27	20
Family Project and Presentation	May 10	25
Total		100

<i>Grading Scale</i>	
A	94 – 100
A-	90 – 93
B+	87 – 89
B	80 – 86
C	75 – 79

PARTICIPATION

Because active participation and engagement is 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 and oral activities.

FAMILY CALENDAR ACTIVITIES

Working with a partner, students will create six family-friendly calendar activities related to either *Te Amo, Bebe* by Lisa Wheeler or *Please, Baby, Please* by Spike Lee. The activities will be culturally and developmentally appropriate and will include a variety of ways for families and young children to interact with the book and its content. Types of activities will be brainstormed in class and class time will be allotted to begin developing the activities. Because the descriptions will be included in a calendar that will be distributed to families, the entries must be 50 words or less and must be carefully edited. Students will e-mail activities to jkidd@gmu.edu.

These entries will be evaluated using a scoring guide based on the criteria listed above.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE DATABASE AND BOOK TALK

Students will create a user-friendly database of at least 10 children's books that are culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate for diverse infants and toddlers and their families. The database will include the following information:

1. complete and accurate bibliographic information (title, author, illustrator, copyright date, city of publication, and publisher)
2. identifiers that will help database users access books (e.g., related themes, topics, concepts, etc.)
3. clear and concise descriptions of the books that include sufficient detail for readers to gain a clear understanding of the content of the book
4. culturally and developmentally appropriate examples of activities families and teachers may do with infants and toddlers related to the books (at least one per book)
5. notes about the representation of diversity as appropriate
6. notes about why the book is appropriate for infants and toddlers

Students will bring at least five of the books to class to share with classmates. Students will be given five minutes to provide a book talk about one or two of the books. The book talk should include an overview of the book, ways the book can be shared and enjoyed with infants and toddlers, and ideas for follow-up activities related to the book. The other books will be shared informally during Drop Everything and Read (DEAR). Students will e-mail the database to the instructor and to the cohort.

The database and book talk will be evaluated using a scoring guide based on the criteria listed above.

LANGUAGE DELAYS AND DISORDERS RESEARCH BRIEF AND PRESENTATION

Students will work with a small group to create a research brief about what is known about the language development of children with a specific disability or medical condition and suggested approaches for enhancing their language development. This research brief will serve as a handout for the 15- and 20-minute presentation the group will give to share the highlights of their findings. The format and content of the brief and presentation will be agreed upon in class and a template for presenting the information will be created. At the same time, a scoring guide for evaluating the briefs and presentations will be developed.

When developing the brief, each member of the group will read at least one resource with pertinent information about the language development of children with the identified disability or medical condition. The information will be synthesized and cited as appropriate. A reference list will be included at the end of the brief and the group member who initially read the text will be noted.

The group will provide a 15- to 20-minute presentation that will include an overview of the research findings, suggestions for supporting speech and language development, and time for questions and discussion.

The research brief and presentation will be evaluated using a scoring guide based on the criteria listed above and developed in class.

LANGUAGE SAMPLE AND ANALYSIS

Students will videotape a focus child interacting with an adult in a natural setting, transcribe the interactions, and write a four- to five-page analysis of their findings and a one- to two-page reflection. The adult may be themselves, a family member, or another caregiver.

1. Students will **videotape** a focus child interacting with an adult for approximately 10 to 12 minutes (may include more than one setting). They will maintain anecdotal records of the situation around the time of the videotaping. These records will 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.). They will submit the VHS videotape with the transcription and written analysis.
2. Students will **transcribe** the language sample. They will 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).
3. Student will **analyze** the language sample and submit a four- to five-page, double-spaced analysis of their data written in APA style and using reference citations. Their analysis will include specific examples from the language sample to support their conclusions and will link the findings to the readings. The analysis will include the following:
 - Background information necessary to understanding the context, child, and any other factors that might affect the analysis
 - An analysis of the focus child's patterns of language development, including 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, including evidence to support the conclusions and link the findings to the readings
 - A description of linguistic elements that may be in the child's repertoire but were not observed during the language sample
 - An examination of the strategies used by the adult to support the child's language and cognitive development in a culturally and developmentally responsive manner, including the turn-taking behaviors seen in the adult-child interaction and any continuity or discontinuity of cultural interactional style between the caregiver and the child
4. Students will write a one- to two-page, double-spaced **reflection** that provides insight into what they learned and what else they need to explore to gain a better understanding of children's language development.
5. Students will **submit a hard copy** of the transcript and analysis **as well as e-mail an e-copy** to jkidd@gmu.edu.
6. The language sample, analysis, and reflection will be evaluated using a scoring guide based on the criteria listed above.

FAMILY LITERACY PROJECT

Students will **make two books** to share with their focus child.

- One book will be based on an oral story shared in the home. This might be a folk tale passed down through the generations, a story about the child or another family member, or an event that recently happened.
- The other book will be about the child and family in their everyday, natural context.

These books will be used during the internship to support the language and literacy development of the child. Students will **videotape** at least one interaction that focused on the book and related activities.

Students will **write a paper**, including reference citations as appropriate, that provides clear insights into how they used stories gathered from the family to develop the two books and implement meaningful language and literacy activities. They will address how they used the books to promote cultural and linguistic continuity and how the child responded to the books and activities. They will include the following:

- A description of how the stories gathered from the family were used to create the books and how the books were developed to promote cultural and linguistic continuity.
- A discussion of the types of activities that took place related to the books, including how they were used to promote cultural and linguistic continuity and how they met the developmental needs of the child
- An explanation of how gathering family stories influenced the planning and implementation of language and literacy activities other than the book activities
- A reflection on how the child responded to the books and activities related to them

Students will be given 10 to 15 minutes to **share their books and several of their language and literacy activities** in small groups. They will explain why they created the books and how they used them to enhance language and literacy development as well as promote cultural and linguistic continuity. They will also note other activities they planned and implemented based on the family stories they gathered.

Students will **e-mail the paper and the family story** written for the curriculum class to jkidd@gmu.edu. They will submit a copy of the books and the VHS videotape with the final project.

The family project will be evaluated using a scoring guide based on the criteria listed above.



EDUT 523 CLASS SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments Due
Week of January 24	Semester Orientation	
February 2	Communication Communication and Culture Developing Language and Literacy Through Children's Literature	Harding-Esch & Riley: Chapter 1 Hulit & Howard: Chapters 1 & 8 Rosenquest (2002)
February 16	Language and Cognition Language Acquisition Bilingualism <i>Being a Bilingual Family</i> <i>Speaker: Kim Amenabar</i> <i>Parent & UTEEM Family Liaison</i>	Harding-Esch & Riley: Chapters 2 – 5 and two case studies Hulit & Howard: Chapters 2 & 3 Literature Calendar Activities
March 2	Typical Language Development Adult-Child Interactions in Language and Literacy Development	Hulit & Howard: Chapters 4 – 6 Parparella & Kasari (2004) Database of Children's Literature and Book Talk
March 23	Typical Speech Development Supporting Early Language and Literacy Development Bookmaking <i>Reach Out and Read: Making Books</i> <i>Part of a Healthy Childhood</i> <i>Speaker: Joan Wabschall</i> <i>Program Coordinator</i>	Hulit & Howard: Chapter 7 & Appendix Diener et al. (2003/04) Lawhon & Cobb (2002) Straub (1999) Language Sample and Analysis
March 28 – April 22	<i>Internship</i>	
April 27	Atypical Speech and Language Development: Delays and Disorders <i>Dorothea</i> <i>Speaker: Laura Gerke</i> <i>Parent & FCPS Cluster II Advisory</i> <i>Committee for Students With</i> <i>Disabilities Representative</i>	Hulit & Howard: Chapter 9 Prizant et al. (2000) Roper & Dunst (2003) Delays and Disorders Research Brief and Presentation
May 10	Learning From Family Stories: Providing Culturally, Linguistically, and Developmentally Appropriate Language and Literacy Experiences	Family Project and Presentation