

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Early Childhood Education Program

EDSE 457/557
EDUT 413/513
Foundations of Language and Literacy for Diverse Learners (3:3:0)
Fall 2009
Thursdays, 7:20 – 10:00 pm
Robinson A 243

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Course Description

Examines complexity of language acquisition and literacy development. Focuses on typical and atypical language development, connections between language and literacy, and diversity of communication styles in families and cultures. Emphasizes first and second language acquisition.

Nature of Course Delivery

The class will have lecture, discussion, group work formats and will require active participation of all students.

Learner Outcomes

This course is designed to enable students to

1. Describe developmental, social, cultural, affective, cognitive, and educational factors that play a role in typical and atypical language development, first and second language acquisition, and reading and writing development.
2. Describe the reading and writing acquisition processes and the interaction among phonological awareness, phonic decoding, spelling, word recognition, reading fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing.
3. Demonstrate the ability to apply current research on typical and atypical language development, second language acquisition, home language, family communication, play, storytelling, and emergent literacy to various settings.
4. Describe English language structure, including phonology, orthography, morphology, syntax, and semantics (and pragmatics).
5. Describe vocabulary acquisition including variation in word meaning.
6. Demonstrate the ability to select children's literature and design meaningful literacy activities that reflect and appreciate cultural, linguistic, and ability diversity.
7. Describe text characteristics including student content preferences, discourse structure, and comprehension, vocabulary, phonemic and syntactic complexity.
8. Describe technology use for early language and literacy instruction and assessment.
9. Describe effective collaboration with school-based teams to identify, select and evaluate children's literature and other materials that meet students' reading needs and interests whether being used in classrooms, libraries, or with parents and caregivers.
10. Summarize the history of reading instruction methodologies and philosophies.

Professional Standards

This concentration is approved for licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia and it complies with the standards for teacher licensure established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The course content has been designed to address the following standards and competencies. (See last page of syllabus for details.)

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

- Standard 6 Communication

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

- Standard 1 Promoting Child Development and Learning

Virginia Professional Endorsement Competencies

- Reading

Virginia Early Childhood Competencies

- (3.5 Language and Literacy) 2 Knowledge and Skills: Reading/English

Required Texts

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.

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

Paley, V.G. 1997. *The girl with the brown crayon*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Course Requirements

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, 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. Laptops and other electronic devices are to be used for educational and learning purposes only and should not be used during class time to check email, surf the web, or communicate with people outside of the class unless part of the class activity.
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.

Attendance

Attendance in class is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions. Absences, tardiness, and leaving early may negatively affect course grades. The following policy is from the university course catalog:

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

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/>.

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.

Grading Criteria

A = 95 – 100	A- = 90 – 94	B+ = 87 – 89	B = 83 – 86
B- = 80 – 82	C = 70 – 79	F = < 70	

A+ is possible if work is of exceptional high quality and includes work above and beyond that required for the course.

Grading Policy

Students in a graduate program must maintain a 3.000 GPA (B average). Endorsement coursework grades must be C or better for undergraduate courses, and B or better for graduate courses. Grades of B minus or better are required for all graduate-level education coursework for licensure. Students with a C or lower in a licensure course must re-take the course and earn a B minus or better to be recommended for Virginia licensure. Only two grades of C will be allowed for completion of the master's degree.

Assignments

Attendance and Participation (15 points)

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:

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as is evidenced by their ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts as well as participate fully in related activities.
- Students are actively involved in in-class learning experiences 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.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class discussions, activities, and written reflections.
- Each student will write a blog entry after each class (at least by Saturday evening each week). It will include a short note about the student's participation for the day and any other comments the student wishes to make.

Language and Literacy Autobiography (10 points)

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.

Write a three part paper: One section with basic dates/facts that will provide a context for the second section with three literacy or language events narrated in more detail and a final section on the influence the language and literacy upbringing has had on the person's life as an adult. 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.

School-Based Interview (10 points)

Students will interview a school professional (i.e., general education teacher, special education teacher, speech and language clinician, school librarian, teaching assistant, administrator, etc.) to find out how they identify, select, and evaluate children's literature and other materials that meet students' reading needs and interests. They will use no names of school personnel, schools, or towns. (It will be helpful to the task to assure interviewees that this is a course assignment, so they do not feel "put on the spot.") **Students will attach their list of interview questions to the assignment.** Their Interview paper should include their reactions and provide evidence of linkage to course content and readings.

Family Interview (10 points)

Students will interview a parent or caregiver of a young child (i.e., birth through grade 3) to find out how he or she identifies and selects books and other materials that meet their child's reading needs and interests. They will use no names or towns. (It will be helpful to the task to assure interviewees that this is a course assignment, so they do not feel "put on the spot.") **They will attach their list of interview questions to the assignment.** Their Interview paper should include their reactions and provide evidence of linkage to course content and readings.

Inquiry into Research-Based Teaching Practices (20 points)

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 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.

Family Language and Literacy Handbook (35 points)

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. It will be comprised of two parts.

- Part One: The broad categories can 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.
- Part Two: Students will include at least five activities developed by themselves, 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 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.

CEHD Syllabus Statements of Expectations

All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm> for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12> for the full honor code.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/1301gen.html>. Click on responsible Use of Computing Policy 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 <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.

Course Topics

Date	Topics	Activities, Readings & Papers Due
Sep 3	Preparing to Teach Diverse Young Children: Very young: Moon, "Souns" [sic] Later: New Standards Grade 3 Examine and Query Syllabus	Discussions & Video Viewing 4/513 KWL & Brainstorm 1 st Assignment (4/557 leave early) Start to read SOR, preview DLL
Sep 10	Foundations of Language Development Acts & Aspects Prisms Milestones ASHA site	Discussions, Slides & Web 4/557 KWL brainstorm 1 st Assignment (4/513 leave early) Start to read SOR, preview DLL
Sep 17	Foundations of Literacy Development Tree/Pillar Building Competencies Writing System Variation	Have read: SOR 5-60 Discussions, Slides & Video Viewing; Activity: Writing System Differences; Activity: Signs in a Different Alphabet;
Sep 24	Language and Culture Heath Chapter 5 Civitas Scenes New Standards Grade 1-2	Have read: DLL 1-36 Due: Lang/Literacy Autobiography Small Group Discussion 1 hr. Discussions, Slides & Video Viewing;
Oct 1	Language and Cognition Tangram Stories	Discussions & Slides Have read: DLL 39-88 4/557 Brainstorm 2 Interviews (4/513 leave early)
Oct 8	Promoting Oral Language Early Division in Talk & Charts Vocabulary (Rare Words)	Discussions & Slides Have read: DLL 91-114 4/513 Brainstorm 2 Interviews (4/557 leave early)
Oct 15	Second Language Acquisition	Discussions & Slides Have read: DLL 117-151 1 hr. On-line Language Tasks Activity; (Appointments Available 1-1 or Groups)
Oct 22	Simultaneous & Sequential Second Language Acquisition	Discussions & Slides Have read: DLL 155-187 Due: Family Interview Project Preview Research-Based Teaching Practices
Oct 29	Learning about Print Sound it Out Land	Have read: SOR 61-107 Discussions, Slides & Video Viewing; Discuss Research-Based Teaching Practices
Nov 5	Early Literacy: Reading Guided Reading	Discussions, Slides & Video Viewing; Have read: SOR 108-119 Due: School-Based Interview

Date	Topics	Activities, Readings & Papers Due
Nov 12	Early Literacy: Writing	Discussions & Slides Have read: SOR 120-124
Nov 19	Collaboration: School, Family and Caregivers History of Reading Instruction Methodologies and Philosophies	Have read: SOR 127-145 1 hr. Ch 6 SOR Related Activities; (Appointments Available 1-1 or Groups)
Nov 26	Holiday: No Class	
Dec 3	Diverse Language and Literacy Practices Paley Video Texts Vary Oral vs. Written language features	Have read: Paley book Discussions, Slides & Video Viewing; Activity: Meaning Morrison & Austen Activity: Practicing PA Due: Research-Based Teaching Practices
Dec 10	Atypical Language Development Language Disorders Assessment and Intervention (DELV Assessment & Ratner Review)	Discussions & Slides Small Group Discussions of Research-Based Teaching Practices
Dec 17*	Language Development and Communication: Taking a Closer Look at the Individual Child	Due: Family Language and Literacy Handbook Small Group Discussions of Handbooks

Dec. 17 is the scheduled exam day for the course; the class meets in the same room but at 7:30-10:15 instead of starting at 7:20.

Those students enrolled via EDUT 413 and EDSE 457 will have the following accommodations: omit the School-Based Interview assignment, partner with another student for the Inquiry into Research-Based Teaching Practices assignment, and, in the Family Language and Literacy Handbook, Part Two, make just two activities, discuss just three children's books, and three technology-based resources (e.g., videos, songs, websites, etc.) that might be of interest to children and their families.

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standard 6 Communication

http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Ethics_and_Practice_Standards&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=9105

Content Standards For Beginning Special Education Teachers

Standard #6: Communication

Special educators understand typical and atypical language development and the ways in which exceptional conditions can interact with an individual's experience with and use of language. Special educators use individualized strategies to enhance language development and teach communication skills to individuals with ELN [Exceptional Learning Needs]. Special educators are familiar with augmentative, alternative, and assistive technologies to support and enhance communication of individuals with exceptional needs. Special educators match their communication methods to an individual's language proficiency and cultural and linguistic differences. Special educators provide effective language models and they use communication strategies and resources to facilitate understanding of subject matter for individuals with ELN whose primary language is not English.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standard 1 Promoting Child Development and Learning <http://208.118.177.216/about/positions/pdf/programStandards.pdf>

1. Promoting child development and learning

Well-prepared early childhood professionals understand what young children are like; understand what influences their development; and use this understanding to create great environments where all children can thrive. This standard emphasizes knowledge of the range of influences on child development—including cultural contexts, economic conditions, health status, and learning styles—and an ability to apply knowledge to improve social interactions, assessment, instruction, and more.

Virginia Professional Endorsement Competencies Reading

register.dls.virginia.gov/vol18/iss12/f8v2021.doc (Volume 18, Issue 12 Virginia Register of Regulations February 25, 2002, page 6)

4. Reading.

- a. Adult education, preK-12, and secondary grades 6-12—reading in the content area: 3 semester hours. Skills in this area shall be designed to impart an understanding of comprehension skills in all content areas, including a repertoire of questioning strategies, summarizing and retelling skills, and strategies in literal, interpretive, critical, and evaluative comprehension, as well as the ability to foster appreciation of a variety of literature and independent reading.
- b. Special education—language acquisition and reading: 6 semester hours. Skills in this area shall be designed to impart a thorough understanding of the complex nature of language acquisition and reading to include: phonemic awareness, an understanding of sound/symbol relationships, explicit phonics instruction, syllables, phonemes, morphemes, decoding skills, word attack skills, and a knowledge of how phonics, syntax, and semantics interact. Additional skills shall include proficiency in a wide variety of comprehension strategies, as well as the ability to foster appreciation of a variety of literature and independent reading.

Virginia Early Childhood Competencies

<http://www.earlychildhood.virginia.gov/documents/Competencies.pdf> (p. 51 Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals) **3.5 Language and Literacy**

Level 1: Provide opportunities through such activities as conversation, field trips, books, and expressive arts, for children to acquire skills in:

- Listening and speaking
- Phonological awareness and alphabetic knowledge
- Print awareness and concepts
- Comprehension
- Early writing