



College of Education and Human Development

Early Childhood Education Program
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ECED 402 Foundations of Language and Literacy for Diverse Young Learners (3:3:0)

Fall 2012

Mondays, 7:20 PM to 10:00 PM

Robinson A 101

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Office hours: by appointment on Monday afternoons or after shortened classes

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

This course uses a distributed learning format requiring timely and active participation of all students throughout the semester. Activities to support student achievement of the learner outcomes include instructor presentations, videos, student team presentations, collaborative student work in small groups in class and in on-line discussion groups, assigned readings, and projects leading to written products. Students engage in timely critical reflection and accountable talk and writing related to the learning activities.

Learner Outcomes

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Describe an overview of language covering the growth of vocabulary, structures (phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics), functions (pragmatics and discourse rhetoric), and acts (expressive, receptive, metalinguistic) while addressing diverse learners (including first and second language learners, dialect diversity and children with typical and atypical development patterns).
2. Describe the factors that play a role in language development and literacy learning.
3. Describe an overview of learning to read and write including phonological awareness (including phonemic awareness), word recognition (including phonics and decoding), reading fluency, reading comprehension, spelling (orthography and developmental), as well as writing mechanics, composition, and completion of writing tasks.
4. Describe in general the current research in language and literacy development and learning including a detailed explanation of one example.
5. Describe an example of an assistive technology for students with special needs regarding early language and literacy instruction.

Professional Standards

This course is aligned with the standards established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).

Textbooks

Burns, M. S., Griffin, P., & Snow, C. E. (Eds.). (1999). *Starting out right: A guide to promoting children's reading success*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

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

Paradis, J., Genesee, F., & Crago, M. B. (2011). *Dual language development & disorders. Second Edition*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

Resnick, L. B., & Snow, C. E. (2009). *Speaking and listening for preschool through third grade*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association. [includes DVD]

Other required reading (available without fee electronically via GMU resources)

Burns, M. S., & Kidd, J. K. (2010). Learning to read. In Peterson, P., Baker, E. & McGaw, B. (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education, Volume 5* (pp. 394-400). Oxford: Elsevier.

Optional readings (also available without fee via GMU resources electronically)

Bernstein Ratner, N. (2008). Atypical language development. Chapter 9, in Berko Gleason, J. & Bernstein Ratner, N. *The development of language* (7th edition). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Conn-Powers, M. Cross, A., Traub, E., & Hutter-Pishgahi, L. (2006). The universal design of early education: Moving forward for all children. *Beyond the journal: Young Children on the Web*. <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/styles/iidc/defiles/ECC/SRUD-MovingForwardArticle.pdf>

Dickinson, D. K. (2011). Teachers' language practices and academic outcomes of preschool children. *Science*, 333, 964-967.

Dyson, A. H., & Smitherman, G. (2009). The right (write) start: African American language and the discourse of sounding right. *Teachers College Record*, 111(4), 973-998.

Glenberg, A.M., Goldberg, A. B., & Zhu, X. (2011) Improving early reading comprehension using embodied CAI. *Instructional Sciences*, 39(1), 27-39.

Hatcher, P. J., Hulme, C., & Snowling, M. J, (2004). Explicit phoneme training combined with phonic reading instruction helps young children at risk of reading failure. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 45(2):338-58.

Marinak, B. A., & Gambrell, L. B. (2008). Intrinsic motivation and rewards: What sustains young children's engagement with text? *Literacy Research and Instruction*, 47, 9-26.

National Early Literacy Panel. (2008). *Developing early literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy. <http://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/NELPReport09.pdf>

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel. Teaching children to read: an evidence-based assessment of the scientific*

research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups (NIH Publication No. 00-4754). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/nrp/upload/report.pdf>

- Roberts, T. A. (2008). Home storybook reading in primary or second language with preschool children: Evidence of equal effectiveness for second-language vocabulary acquisition. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 43(2), 103–130.
- Stanton-Chapman, T. L. & Snell, M. E. (2011). Promoting turn-taking skills in preschool children with disabilities: The effects of peer-based social communication intervention. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 26(3), 303-319.
- Vasilyeva, M., Huttenlocher, J. & Waterfall, H. (2006). Effects of language intervention on syntactic skill levels in preschoolers. *Developmental Psychology*. 42(1), 164-174.

George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students

- Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Mason Email – Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301ge.html>].
- Counseling and Psychological Services – The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops, and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- Office of Disability Services – Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

Core Values Commitment: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

Collaboration

Collaboration is an important human activity that involves shared responsibility in promoting healthy, productive lives, and educational success. We commit ourselves to work toward these goals in genuine partnerships with individuals, families, community agencies, schools, businesses, foundations, and other groups at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

Ethical Leadership

In all professions represented by the college, leadership is an essential component denoting ability and willingness to help lead professional practice to higher levels. We commit ourselves to practice ethical leadership through deliberate and systematic attention to the ethical principles that guide all leaders in a moral society.

Innovation

We have a history of creating dynamic, innovative programs, and we are dedicated to continue creating innovative approaches in all areas of our work. We commit ourselves to seeking new ways to advance knowledge, solve problems, improve our professional practice, and expand on our successes.

Research-Based Practice

The best practice in any discipline is based upon sound research and professional judgment. We commit ourselves to basing our instruction, scholarship, and policy recommendations on well-established principles that, wherever possible, emerge from research and reflection on its implications for professional practice.

Social Justice

Social justice embodies essential principles of equity and access to all opportunities in society, in accordance with democratic principles and respect for all persons and points of view. We commit ourselves to promoting equity, opportunity, and social justice through the college's operations and its missions related to teaching, research, and service.

Course Requirements

General Requirements

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. It is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class and on-line.
2. 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. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message or send an email before class. 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 [sic] an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

3. In line with Mason's policy that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious holidays, students shall be given an opportunity to make up, within a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observations in advance of the class that will be missed. Notice should be provided in writing as soon as possible.
4. During face-to-face meetings, cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Students must keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g., iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only, but students must submit a request in writing to do so. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant deduction in their participation grade.
5. 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 students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to the instructor prior to the assignment due date (when possible). If the student does not communicate with the instructor, a late penalty will be applied.
6. Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the [Office for Academic Integrity](#) for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially it means this: When responsible for a task, the student will perform that task. When a student relies on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, they will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind), students will ask for guidance and clarification.

Written Assignments

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation. The American Psychological Association, Sixth 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 Mason library web guide at <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/style>. Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support.

Students will do the following:

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 D = 60 – 69 F = < 60

Grading Policy

All CEHD undergraduate and graduate students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the current catalog, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.gmu.edu>. Those students enrolled in a CEHD Licensure Graduate Certificate program, however, must earn a B- or better in all licensure coursework. A degree-seeking graduate student will be dismissed after accumulating grades of F in two courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A 3.0 grade point average is required for completion of the graduate degree.

Specific Course Assignments

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance & Participation (including on-line activities)	Ongoing	20
Exam on first part of course	October 22	20
Instructional Research Articles Analysis Project	<i>Choice: November 5;</i> Final due: November 19	20
Assisting Students with Special Needs (group project)	<i>Choice: November 21;</i> Due: December 3 <i>Present: December 17</i>	20
Family Project	Final due: December 17	20
TOTAL		100

Attendance and Participation (20 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 and online learning experiences as is evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3) not using laptops and other electronic devices during class time except as approved to

support learning within the current class activity, (4) completing written work related to the activities, and (5) supporting the participation and learning of classmates on-line and face-to face.

- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions and activities as well as in written work.

Note: To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to www.gmu.edu.

Exam on first part of course (20 points)

Goal: Review and summarize course information about language. Prepare to use language knowledge relevant to literacy in the family project.

Content: Addresses the following topics explored throughout the first part of the term:

1. three language acts (expressive, receptive, meta-linguistic)
2. three aspects of language
 - Vocabulary
 - 2 types of functions (1. pragmatics, 2. rhetoric/discourse/genres)
 - 4 systems of structures (1. phonology, 2. morphology, 3. syntax, 4. semantics)
3. diversity related to languages and cultures
 - dual language development
 - dialect difference
4. atypical language development among children identified with Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Speech Impairments; Hearing Impairments; Specific Language Impairments

Resources: Power Points and notes from class posted on Blackboard, required text books and articles assigned for weeks 1 through 8, small group on-line activity 1.

Form: Individual in-class handwritten answers to short answer questions and a few longer answer questions. An hour and a half will be allotted to it. Students will **not** have computer access but may bring and consult resources (text books, articles, printouts from PowerPoints and notes posted on class Blackboard, their own notes). Students in this ECED 402 class will have a separate exam with fewer questions than those required of students in the graduate course.

Instructional Research Articles Analysis project (20 points)

Goal: Familiarity with the professional research literature that informs early childhood educators about good practices for promoting children's language and literacy.

Audience: Early childhood education academic colleagues

Content: Analyze a refereed (also called peer reviewed) article about attempts to improve child language or literacy learning or development. There is a hands-on part of the project, intended to enable and demonstrate deep understanding of the instruction implemented in the article. It is *not* a replication of a study. It calls for using materials like those used in the studies being analyzed and trying to do the instruction studied with the assistance of at least one child confederate.

The written paper should include the following:

- an introduction of the topic about language or literacy growth and how it is addressed by the article, including
 - an indication of the author's theoretical motivation,
 - a description of some of the background research literature the study is developed from;

- a description of
 - the instruction involved, including the procedures and materials used,
 - the design of the study,
 - how were child subjects assigned to different conditions
 - how was data collected
 - which measures and analytic techniques were used,
 - the major conclusions;
- a description of the hands-on part of your work based on the plans for, the implementation of, and the results of your hands-on experience and what it led you to think about the article it was derived from;
- a conclusion about the value the article has (or does not) have for research-based instructional practices in early childhood education.

Resources: One article from a professional journal that reports on studies of instructional research on the language or literacy growth of young children related to a topic of special interest to the student. The article is to be chosen from a structured list provided by the instructor.

Associated online Blackboard activities: At least Activity 2: the search for research activity.

Form: Use GMU email to negotiate the article you will use with the instructor. Identify the articles with the complete APA reference for it. (Do not send an attached copy of the article.) For the completed paper, submit in electronic form using the Blackboard assignment tool or GMU email. Good written products generally have about 8-14 APA style pages. Students will use the complete APA style expected for papers submitted for publication, including page conventions, references and in-text citations. (See also “Written Assignments” section above.)

Submission dates:

By **November 5**, the choice of articles should be successfully negotiated with the instructor.

On **November 19** the final complete paper is due.

Group project: Assisting Students with Special Needs in Language and Literacy (20 points)

Goal: Learn about the special language and literacy needs that challenge some children in school during early childhood. Explore the assistance available for teachers to use— from no technology, to low-, mid- and high-technology. Collaborate within a team to contribute to peer professional development.

Audience: Early childhood education practitioner colleagues.

Content: Students work in small teams to study the special needs related to language or literacy growth that some children encounter in early childhood education and on the assistance teachers can use to ameliorate the difficulties encountered by children experiencing those needs. The choice of focus will be negotiated with the instructor to avoid too much duplication and to encourage diversity of focus for the class. The team will explore provided materials ranging from manuals to research to the state standards of language and literacy learning. They will prepare a brochure designed to help teachers understand the needs and the assistance available. Their work will be distributed to their classmates and the team will present their results to peers.

The team will gather information to explain the following topics about their chosen focus:

- how to identify children in need likely to be helped by the assistance described;
- which area of language and/or literacy is helped and how teachers use the assistance for specific curricular goals in language and/or literacy;
- which theories and empirical evidence support use of assistance for this need;
- examples of the assistance, including its use in practice.

Resources & Associated online Blackboard activity: The resources and detailed directions for this project are provided within Activity 4: Needs and Assists. Parts of Activities 2 (Search for research) and 3(Beyond Class Plus) may also help.

Form: Submit as a team in electronic form using the Blackboard assignment tool or GMU email. The style and format should be appropriate to the teacher audience for the brochure. While a six-panel tri-fold is a common format for this project, different pamphlet shapes and sizes may be used. Appendices can be used as well. Sources consulted must be indicated and peers will be informed about how they can check on and pursue the information provided. Complete adherence to the APA style for articles submitted for publication is not required in the brochure, but good academic writing standards should be observed. (See also “Written Assignments” section above.)

The team will have 15 to 20 minutes to introduce their product to the class.

Submission dates:

By **November 21**, the choice of needs and assists that the team will focus on should have been negotiated successfully with the instructor.

On **December 3**, the final complete written project is due.

On **December 17**, the project will be presented to the class.

Family Project (20 points)

Goal: Review and summarize course information about literacy. Prepare to (a) assist families to understand the complex nature of children’s literacy growth and (b) to help parents partner with teachers for the child’s benefit in the light of the non-school factors that affect the child’s development.

Audience: Families of young children

Content: Address the following topics explored throughout the semester:

1. integrated components for accomplished reading, including
 - a. foundations
 - b. comprehending written
 - c. printed word identification
 - d. fluency
2. integrated components for writing drawing on literacy foundations developed also for reading but including
 - a. composing meaningfully
 - b. producing written words
 - c. finishing with self-evaluation, editing, revising, publishing

The final product should include the following features:

- a. frameworks to orient and motivate families to learn about literacy
- b. introduction of specialized terms with examples explained
- c. some milestones or benchmarks
- d. research supported “how-to” segments (including materials, procedures, and rationale) so home activities can complement school work to enhance child language and literacy.

Resources: Power Points and notes from class sessions, materials from small group Blackboard discussions, class books and articles required and optional in the syllabus and on Blackboard.

Material from Wikipedia or a general web search should be avoided unless its coherence with current scholarship is verified.

Associated online Blackboard activities: At least Activity 3: Beyond class plus and Activity 2: search for research.

Form: Individual written material submitted in electronic form using the Blackboard assignment tool or GMU email. Many different formats are acceptable: handbook, newsletter, series of columns or blogs, Power Points with discussion notes for bi-monthly family meetings, etc. See also the “Written Assignments” section above. The style and format should be appropriate to the family audience. Sources consulted should be indicated and families should be informed about them. Complete adherence to the APA style for articles submitted for professional publications is not required, but good academic writing standards should be adhered to.

Draft Course Schedule and Topics

Date	Topic	Readings & Other Assignments
Class 1 8/27	Introduction to course: Discuss syllabus, Blackboard, on-line activities & assignments Preview Resnick & Snow; Paradis et al. Overview acts & aspects of language Language acts: expressive, receptive, meta-linguistic.	Begin on-line activity group (1) child talk (random). Paradis et al., 2011, Chap. 1, 2, 3 Resnick & Snow, 2009, 1-16 +
9/3 Labor Day NO CLASS MEETING		
Class 2 9/10	Language Aspects 1: Functions 1 Pragmatics & 2 Rhetoric/discourse genres. Stanton-Chapman & Snell: discussion	Begin on-line activity group (2) search for research (self-select).
Class 3 9/17	Diverse ability: Autistic Spectrum Disorders Language Aspects 2: Vocabulary: breadth, depth, speed Diverse language/culture: translation equivalents & cognates.	Paradis et al., 2011, Chap. 4, 5, 6
Class 4 9/24	Discuss Paradis 1-6: discussion; Appointments after short class: group or 1-1	Review Paradis et al, Chap. 1-6
Class 5 10/1	Language Aspects 3: Structure 1: Phonology. Diverse abilities: Hearing; Speech.	
Class 6 Tuesday 10/9	Language Aspects 3: Structure 2: Morphology. Diverse language/culture: dialect Dyson & Smitherman: Discussion	
Class 7 10/15	Language Aspects 3: Structures 3 & 4: Syntax & Semantics. Vasilyeva et al.: discussion Diverse abilities: Specific Language Impairment	Paradis et al., 2011, Chap. 9 Posts to child-talk activity end.
Class 8 10/22	Exam on language half of course Fundamentals: identify, interpret, evaluate & apply valid research about oral language, reading, & writing. Literacy frameworks. Burns & Kidd: Discussion.	In class open resource exam Posts to search for research activity end; Burns & Kidd, 2010; Begin on-line activities: (3) beyond class plus (random) (4) needs & assist (select).
Class 9 10/29	Literacy: Reading foundation & comprehending Paley: Discussion Glenberg et al.: discussion	Paley, 1997

Date	Topic	Readings & Other Assignments
Class 10 11/5	Literacy: Reading word identification (phonemic awareness, sound-symbol relations, decoding skills – phonics, word attack, syllable & morphology patterns – sight vocabulary. Hatcher et al.: discussion	<i>Instructional research articles analysis choice finished.</i>
Class 11 11/12	Literacy: Reading fluency Diverse ability: Intellectual Disability (ID). Diverse ability: Reading Impairment Paradis et al., 10: discussion) Language diversity: Roberts discussion	Paradis et al., 2011, Chap. 10;
Class 12 11/19	Burns et al., 1999: Discussion Literacy: Writing spelling: purpose & limits of estimated (invented) spelling, orthographic patterns & strategies for spelling study	Burns et al., 1999 Instructional research articles analysis project due <i>Assisting students choice settled November 21</i>
Class 13 11/26	Literacy: Writing for memory, planning, communication and creative expression. Developmental, social, cultural, affective, cognitive, & educational factors in oral language, reading, & writing development Paradis et al., 7 & 8: discussion	Paradis et al., 2011, Chap. 7 & 8
Class 14 12/3	Interdependence & collaboration of families, caregivers & school professionals. Implications of literacy foundations for assessment and instruction	Assisting Students with Special Needs Project due. Posts to last 2 on-line activities end.
Exam substitute 12/17	(7:30-10:15) Presentations about assistance to support language, reading, and writing for children with special need. Family Project due	

Schedule subject to change based on needs of class and discretion of the instructor.