

**ED 525-001 Language Development in Home and School Contexts
Course Outline, Fall 2004**

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Class meetings: Mondays, 1-4 PM, Room 2334 SEB

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings, 9 to noon or by appt.

Course Description:

The purpose of the course is to study the language development of children from birth through the school-age years. The primary focus is on language learning in the context of the home and school. The first part of the course covers theories of language learning and principles of language development. It also focuses on language learning in early childhood, including the influences of home and preschool contexts. The second part of the course is devoted to theories and issues of language learning during the school-age years. Special emphasis is placed on three topics: (a) the relation of language and literacy acquisition, (b) the nature and extent of classroom discourse, and (c) language-learning challenges faced by speakers of dialects, second-language learners, and students with disabilities. A final topic is instruction in language and the use of language in literacy activities.

Readings:

Two required books can be purchased at Ulrich's:

Freeman, D.E., & Freeman, Y.S. (2004). *Essential linguistics*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Cazden, B.B. (2001). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

In addition, there is a packet of readings at EXCEL (117 S. University; telephone 996-1500).

Requirements:

1. Attend class and participate in class discussions. Take two “turns” as a discussion leader.
2. Complete three assignments for class. (Details are provided at the end of the course outline.)
 - a. Assignment #1 involves collecting and analyzing a sample of a child’s language .
 - b. Assignment #2 involves analysis of children’s retellings of a story.
 - c. Assignment #3 involves a report of three research studies on a topic we are studying as part of the course. (Topics are marked with asterisks.)
3. Complete a survey of knowledge about language and language learning. One version will be given for practice at the beginning of the course. A second version will be given for credit at the end of the course.

Evaluation: The products of the three projects and the end-of-course survey are each worth 20% of the student's grade. Participation as discussion leader and class reports of written assignments account for the remaining 20% of the grade.

Outline of topics and readings:

Sept. 13: What is language, and how do you learn it?

Background Reading:

Freeman & Freeman, Introduction, Chapter 1 First Language Acquisition, & Chapter 2 Written and Second language acquisition

Sept. 20: Language development, birth to age 5

Readings:

1. Clark, E. V. 2003). Chapter 2 In conversation with children and Ch. 4 Early words. In *First language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

In preparation for the language sampling project, please read the following:

1. Shipley K.G., & McAfee, J.G. (1998). Assessment in speech-language pathology (from Ch. 6, Assessment of language), pp. 194-216.
2. Owens, R.E. (1991). Excerpt from Chapter 3, Language sampling (pp. 62-74). In *Language disorders*. Merrill.

Sept. 27: Home factors in early language learning***

Readings:

1. Hart, B. (2002). Language development: Does the environment matter? In Accardo, P.J., Rogers, B.T., & Capute, A.J. (Eds.). *Disorders of language development* (pp. 40-54). Baltimore: York Press.
2. Snow, C.E., Burns, M. S., & Griffin, P. (1998). Chapter 5 Preventing reading difficulties before kindergarten. In *Preventing reading difficulties in young children* (pp. 137-171). Washington, DC: National Academy Press..
4. Bus, Adriana G. (2001). Joint caregiver-child storybook reading: A route to literacy development. In S.B..Neuman & D.K.Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp. 179-191). NY: Guilford Press.

Exercise for class: Carry out an analysis of the language sample handed out in class. Bring your analysis with you for discussion with the class.

October 4: Language learning in preschool and kindergarten***

Readings:

1. Dickinson D.K., & Smith, M.W. (1994). Long-term effects of preschool teachers' book readings of low-income children's vocabulary and story comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly* , 29, 105-122.
2. Watson, R. (2001). Literacy and oral language: Implications for early literacy acquisition. In S.B.Neuman & D.K.Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp. 43-53). NY: Guilford Press.
3. Beck, I. L., & McKeown, M.G. (2001). Text Talk: Capturing the benefits of read-aloud experiences for young children. *The Reading Teacher*, 55, 10-20.
4. Morrow, L.M. (1985). Retelling stories: A strategy for improving children's comprehension, concept of story structure, and oral language complexity. *Elementary School Journal*, 85, 647-661.

October 11: The world view

Readings:

1. Berg, C. (2003). The role of grounded theory and collaborative research. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 38, 104-111.
2. Jimenez, R.T. (2003). Literacy and Latino students in the United States: some considerations, questions, and new directions. *RRQ*, 38, 128.
3. Luke, A. (2002). Literacy and the other: A sociological approach to literacy research and policy in multilingual societies. *RRQ*, 38, 132-141.

Assignment #1 is due: Reports of the collection and analysis of a language sample. Be prepared to explain your project and results to the class.

October 18: Fall study break -- ****NO CLASS****

October 25: Language development and literacy acquisition: Morphology, syntax, and semantics***

Readings:

1. McGregor, K.K. (2004). Developmental dependencies between lexical semantics and reading. In C.A.Stone, E.R.Silliman, B.J.Ehren, & K. Appel (Eds.), *Handbook of language and literacy* (pp. 318-339). NY: Guilford Press.
2. Carlisle, J.F. (2004). Morphological processes that influence learning to read. In (In C.A.Stone, E.R.Silliman, B.J.Ehren, & K. Appel (Eds.), *Handbook of language and literacy*. NY: Guilford Press.
3. Freeman and Freeman, Chapters 3, 7, and 9.

November 1: Learning English as a second language in the school-age years ***

Readings:

1. Freeman and Freeman, Chapters 4 and 8
2. Wong Fillmore, L. (1991). Second-language learning in children: A model of language learning in social context. In E. Bialystok (Ed.), *Language processing in bilingual children* (pp. 49-69). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3. Tabors, P.O. & Snow, C. E. (2001). Young bilingual children and early literacy development. In S.B..Neuman & D.K.Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp. 159-178). NY: Guilford Press.
4. Zecker, L.B. (2004). Learning to read and write in two languages. In Stone et al., *Handbook of language and literacy*. NY: Guilford Press.

Assignment # 2 is due: Analysis of children's story retellings.

November 8: Language and literacy development of students who speak African American English *** (Guest speaker: Dr. Julie Washington)

Readings:

1. Washington, J.A. & Craig, H.K. (1996). Reading performance and dialectal variation. In A.G.Kamhi, J.L.Harris, & K.E.Pollock (Eds.), *Literacy in African American communities*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

2. Vernon-Feagans, L. Hammer, C.S., Miccio, A., & Manlove, E. (2001). Early language and literacy skills in low-income African American and Hispanic children. In Neuman & Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp. 192-210). NY: Gillford Press.

3. Foorman, B.R., Seals, L.M., Anthony, J., & Pollard-Durodola, S. (2003). A vocabulary enrichment program for third and fourth grade African American students: Description, implementation and impact. In B.R.Foorman (Ed.). *Preventing and remediating reading difficulties* (pp. 419-441). Baltimore: York Press.

November 15: Classroom discourse

Readings:

1. Cazden, Chapters 1-5

2. Rosen, C. & Rosen, H. (1973). Excerpt from *The language of primary school children* (pp. 42-47). Penguin Books

November 22: Classroom discourse: Learning through talk in school

Readings:

1. Cazden, Chapters 6-7

2. Palincsar, A.S., Brown, A.L., & Campione, J.C. (date). First-grade dialogues for knowledge acquisition and use.

3. Lloyd, P. (1990). Children's communication. In R. Grieve & M. Hughes (Eds.), *Understanding children* (pp. 51-70). Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.

November 29: Children with language learning disabilities and hearing impairment ***
(Guest speakers: Drs. Joanne M. Pierson and Connie Thompson]

Readings:

1. Bishop, D.V.M. (1997). Ch.2 Specific language impairment. In *Uncommon understanding*.
2. Catts, H.W. (1999). Language basis of reading and reading disabilities: Evidence from a longitudinal investigation. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 3, 331-361.
3. Yoshinaga-Itano, C. Sensitive periods in the development of language of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. In Accardo et al (Ed.), *Disorders of language development* (pp. 125-148). Baltimore: York Press.
4. Gaillard, W.D., Xu, B., & Balsamo, L. (2002). Neuroimaging and disorders of communication. In Accardo et al (Ed.), *Disorders of language development* (pp. 57-81). Baltimore: York Press.

December 6: Issues of language instruction and use in literacy activities ***

Readings:

1. Maloch, B. (2002). Scaffolding student talk: One teacher's role in literature discussion groups. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37, 94-112.
2. Alvermann, D. (2000). Classroom talk about texts: Is it dear, cheap, or a bargain at any price? In *Reading for meaning: Fostering reading comprehension in the middle grades*. Newark, DE: IRA.
3. Nippold, M.A. (1998). Ch. 2 The literate lexicon. In *Later language development*. Austin, TX: ProEd.
4. Graves, M.F. (2000). A vocabulary program to complement and bolster middle grade comprehension programs. In *Reading for meaning: Fostering reading comprehension in the middle school grades*. Newark, DE: IRA.

Presentations of Assignment # 3.

Assignment# 1: Language Sample Analysis

The purpose of this project is to acquire first-hand knowledge of preschool children's language development by applying methods of analysis of children's spoken language. Steps involved in the project:

You will be working with a classmate on this project. Together, you will decide on a purpose for comparing two children's language (for example, to see if the language of twins is very similar; to see how the language of a child with a sensory impairment differs from that of a same-age with normal sensory functioning).

What are general guidelines concerning the completion of this assignment?

1. Plan the project, find participants, and be aware of the general requirements you need to meet.

- Find parents with preschool children who are willing to let you tape-record a session (about 20 min) in which you are playing and interacting verbally with their child. The children should be between the ages of 2 and 5. The parent must be willing to sign a consent form that describes the project and the involvement of their child as well as gives assurances concerning how the child's language sample will be used. You must tell the parents that this is an exercise for a course you are taking; it will not give them any kind of diagnostic information (etc.) (Further explanation will be given in class.)
- Each of you should interview **one** of the two children and be primarily responsible for analysis of the language sample of that child.
- Each of you will hand in a paper that presents the purpose, method, and results for the child you interviewed. However, the partners will work together to prepare and present a brief overview of your language-sampling project for the class.
- The activity involves playing with small toys and play dough; bags of materials for the activity can be borrowed from me. To make comparison of the children's language possible, you should use the same activities with each child.

2. Plan to interview the child in a quiet place. Allow some time before the interview to get to know the child and talk with the parent. You may want to engage the child in some other familiar activity before you start the interview.

3. Tape record the 20-min session and transcribe it, staying as true as possible to the language used by the speakers (you and the child). You will need at least 50 utterances from the child; an utterance is a single thought or expressive unit. (IRIS has transcribers that are very helpful in transcribing tapes of language samples.)

4. Carry out analyses of the child's language, using explanations provided for you in the course readings. *Required analyses* include the following:

Mean length of utterance (MLU)

Vocabulary (type/token ratio)

Morphological development (using Brown's stages)

Syntactic development (use one of two systems)

Optional: Some other aspects of the child's language you might want to examine are these:

- Appropriateness of responses to WH questions
- Turn-taking
- Neologisms
- Dialectic markers
- Pragmatics
- Articulation

5. Your written report of the project should have the following sections:

- 1) Description of the child you worked with and the purpose of collecting a language sample selected by you and your partner.
- 2) Explanation of the activity and the setting.
- 3) Provision of a detailed analysis of the language sample. (Include relevant charts and make sure to provide enough detail so that I can check your calculations.) Include interpretations of the results of the project and, along with your evaluation of the validity of the sample (that is, do you think it is representative of the child's language?).
- 4) Include a full transcript of the part of the session that you used for your analyses in an Appendix. Each utterance must be on a line by itself, and the utterances should be numbered sequentially. Make sure you carefully follow the rules for determining what counts as an utterance for purposes of analyses.

6. Your paper will be evaluated on the following criteria: (1) explanation of the project, and explanation of the setting and activities; (2) quality of the analyses of the language sample, including identification of utterances; (3) completeness and thoughtfulness of your interpretations and evaluation of the results of your project.

7. In your report to the class, you and your partner should briefly explain the purpose of your project and the results of the two language sample analyses. What did you learn? Include references to any sources you have used to help interpret the language events you have observed, recorded and analyzed. You are also encouraged to comment on problems that occurred in collecting/analyzing the language samples.

Assignment # 2: Analysis of children's retelling of a story.

The purpose of this assignment is to examine the relation of children's developing language and literacy. It is difficult to assess children's comprehension of stories before they can read, and yet it is important to gather information about children's story comprehension in the first few years of school. One method that has been used in the past is analysis of children's retelling or wordless picture books. We will use this method to analyze children's oral language and their story comprehension; needless to say, the relation of the two is important. You will be give a series of transcribed story retellings that were gather as part of a research project. Information about the children's picture walk will be provided. You are asked to use a rubric to score the quality of each of the retellings. You are also asked to analyze the complexity of the vocabulary, grammar, and morphology of the children's retelling.

In your written report for this assignment, provide an overview of your thoughts about the purposes and problems of analyzing the children's story retellings. Provide detailed analyses of each of the story retellings. Further directions and rubrics for analysis of the retellings will be handed out in class.

Class discussion will focus on the students' analyses to address important issues—for example, is this a promising method for analyzing students' story comprehension? Are there indications that the children's oral language limits their story comprehension or recall? How varied is the vocabulary of the kindergartners and first graders in this research project?

Assignment #3: Research projects

The purpose of this assignment is to provide an opportunity for you to study one of the course topics in greater depth. You will be asked to select one of the course topics marked by asterisks. I will ask students to sign up for a topic at the second class meeting.

Your job is to find three recently published research reports (articles, book chapters) on the topic. You are asked to read and analyze these and to write a paper in which you (a) discuss the method and findings of the three papers you have selected on the topic and (b) discuss the relation of these studies and the readings for the course on this topic. The paper should not exceed 5 pages double-spaced with at least 1" margins. Your written report will be evaluated on the following criteria: 1) selection of relevant and recently published research reports, 2) clarity of presentation of the purpose, method, results, and significant of the three papers, 3) integration and discussion of findings of the three papers and course reading, 4) overall coherence and quality of writing.

At the last class meeting, students will give reports about their research on the topics they have selected. Please bring copies of the references to the articles you will be discussing for each member of the class; this will give the group a set of references they can go to if they choose to read other recent papers on the topic.

Discussion Leader:

The purpose of this activity is to provide an opportunity for students to generate questions and lead a discussion on course topics, reading, and issues. Typically, this discussion will take place in the last half hour of the class meeting. Several students may serve as discussion leaders for a given topic, and when this is the case, I encourage them to work together. Along with selecting issues for discussion, you may want to select or design an activity for the class or to provide additional materials to shape the discussion (e.g., a videoclip).

Suggestions for Additional Reading

- Adger, C.T., Snow, C.E., & Christian, D. (2002). *What teachers need to know about language*. McHenry, IL: Delta Systems.
- August, D., & Hakuta, K. (1997). *Improving schooling for language-minority children: A research agenda*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Barnes, D., Britton, J., & Torbe, M. (1986). *Language, the learner and the school* (3rd ed.), Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.
- Badian, N.A. (2000). *Prediction and prevention of reading failure*. Baltimore: York Press.
- Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G., Hamilton, R.L., & Kucan, L. (1997). *Questioning the author: An approach for enhancing student engagement with text*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G. & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. NY: Guilford Press.
- Brisk, M.E. (1998). *Bilingual education: From compensatory to quality schooling*. Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum.
- Brown, R. (1973). *A first language: The early stages*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Cohen, E. (1994). *Designing group work strategies for the heterogeneous classroom*. NY: Teachers College Press.
- Cullinan, B.E. (1993). *Children's voices: Talk in the classroom*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- De Villiers, P.A., and de Villiers, J.G. (1979). *Early language*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Dickinson, D.K., & Tabors, P.O. (Eds.). (2000). *Beginning literacy with language*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Hart, B., & Risley, T.R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

- Hart, B., & Risley, T.R. (1999). *The social world of children learning to talk*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes
- Heath, S.B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Kamhi, A.G., Pollack, K.E., & Harris, J.L. (1996). *Communication development and disorders in African American children: Research, assessment, and intervention*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Lemke, J. (1990). *Talking science: Language, learning and values*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Leonard, L.B. (1998). *Children with specific language impairment*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- McBride-Chang, C. (2003). *Children's literacy development*. London: Arnold Publishers,
- Nelson, K. (1996). *Language in cognitive development*. Cambridge,: Cambridge University Press.
- Newkirk, T. (1989). *More than stories: The range of children's writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Books.
- Perez, B (Ed.). (1998). *Sociocultural contexts of language and literacy*. Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum.
- Pinker, S. (1994). *The language instinct*. NY: William Morrow & Co. (also recommended is *Words and Rules*)
- Reyes, M., & Halcon, J.J. (2001). *The best for our children: Critical perspectives on literacy for Latino students*. NY: Teachers College Press.
- Rosen, C., & Rosen, H. (1973), *The language of primary school children*. NY: Penguin Books.
- Roser, N.L. & Martinez, M.G. (Eds.) (1995). *Book talk and beyond: Children and teachers respond to literature*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Smith, P.G. (Ed.) (2001). *Talking classrooms: Shaping children's learning through oral language instruction*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Hoyle, S.M., & Adger, C.T. 1998). *Kids' talk: Strategic language use in later childhood*. NY: Oxford University Press.

van Kleeck, A., Stahl, S., & Bauer, E.B. (2003). *On reading books to children: Parents and teachers*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Wells, G. (1986). *The meaning makers: Children learning language and using language to learn*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Wolfram, W., Adger, C.T., & Christian, D. (1999). *Dialects in schools and communities*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.