

T&L 529

Language Development in Children

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Office hours. Monday & Wednesday 12:30-2:00

3 credits

Summer 2007

Course Description:

Language is central to the human experience. It arises in all cultures and can be learned effortlessly by most children. In fact, children can't resist it – deprive them of language and they will create their own. The structure of language, and the way it is learned, reflect the intricate organizational power of the mind of the human species. In this course we will study the development of speech and language in young children and its influence on early literacy and young children's thinking. How is language and thought related? We will also focus on how language and literacy development is shaped by culture and is influenced by cultural bias. By gaining a deeper understanding of the processes of and influences on language development, we will be better able to establish rich environments that support the development of language and literacy in children of all ability levels.

Course Objectives:

1. To understand the development of language in children, birth through age eight and its relationship to early literacy.
(ESPB-ECE-Standard 8.81, INTASC # 1 &2)
2. To stimulate an increased interest in the regular observation of children as a necessary requirement in the understanding of the educational needs of children.
(ESPB-ECE-Standard 8.8.6, INTASC #8)
3. To apply knowledge of the development of language in real practice through observations of children and their work or play.
(ESPB-ECE-Standard 8.8.1 & 8.8.6, INTASC # 1, 2, & 8)
4. To demonstrate the need for and develop skill in the writing of clear and accurate observational reports.
(ESPB-ECE-Standard 8.8.6, INTASC # 8)
5. To understand atypical language development and methods employed to accommodate the stimulation of language and early literacy development.
(ESPB-ECE-Standard 8.8.7, INTASC # 1 & 2)

Required Texts:

In lieu of a textbook articles will be assigned and students will be required to search out and share journal articles related to language development, early literacy, and young children's thinking.

Recommended Readings:

Pinker, Steven, (1994). *The Language Instinct*. New York, NY: Perennial Harper Collins.

Hulit, L.M., & Howard, M.R. (2002). *Born to talk*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Cacciari, C. & Levarato, M. (1989). *How children understand idioms in discourse*. *Journal of Child Language*, 16, 387-405.

- Catts, H.W., & Kamhi, A.G. (1999). *Language and reading disabilities*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon
- Battle, D. (2002). Language development and disorders in culturally and linguistically diverse children. In D. Bernstein & E. Tiegerman-Farber (Eds.) *Language and communication disorders in children*. (pp. 354-386). Boston MA: Allyn & Bacon
- Kaufman, B. (1994) *Sonrise: The Miracle Continues*. Tiburon, CA: H.J. Kramer, Inc.
- Vypotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bus, A.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.179-210). New York, NY: The Guilford Press
- Vernon-Feagans, L. (1996). *Children's talk in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge, MAL: Blackwell
- Rice, M., & Woodsmall, L. (1988). Lessons from television: Children's word learning when viewing. *Children Development*, 59, 420-429.
- Saville-Troike, M. (1991, Spring). Teaching and testing for academic achievement: The role of language development, *Occasional Papers in Bilingual Education* 4,3-15.
- Roberts, J.E., & Burchinal, M.R. (2001). The complex interplay between biology and environment: Otitis Media and mediating effects on early literacy development. In S.B. Neuman & D.K. Dickerson (Eds.), *Handbook of early literacy research* (pp. 232-241). New York, NY: The Guilford Press
- Rembaugh, D.M. & Savage-Rembaugh, E.S. (1996). Biobehavioral roots of language: Words, apes, and a child. In B.M. Velichkovsky & D.M. Rembaugh (Eds.), *Communicating meaning: The evolution and development of language* (pp. 257-274). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Tomasillo, M. (1996). The cultural roots of language. In B.M. Velichkovsky & D.M. Rembaugh (Eds.), *Communicating meaning: The evolution and development of language* (pp.275-307). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Bates, E. (1999). Language and the infant brain. *Journal of Communication Disorders*, 32, 195-205.
- Power, B., & Hubbard, R. (2002). *Language development: A reader for teachers, 2nd ed.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Course Requirements:

1. **Class Presentations** – Each Student will be required to make two presentations and lead the class discussions on various course topics. When in charge of a topic students will need to provide three articles for the other students to read and use as discussion springboards during class. The instructor will provide copies of the articles if the article or reference is provided within 3 school days of class (i.e. the Wednesday before class)
2. **Children's/Juvenile Fiction Reaction Paper** – a 4-5 page book reflection detailing your reactions to a book of your choice & instructor's approval.. Include specific references to passages in the book to support your assertions. Apply concepts, ideas, and knowledge discussed and gained from class to your reaction to the book. This book must address an issue related to children and literacy, language development, culture and/or cognition. Some ideas might be a book that addresses the issue of ESL, ELL, Hearing Impairment, Speech/Language Difficulty, Autism, mental handicap. This paper is due by Monday June 25.

3. **Class activities** - Various in class activities will be conducted. These activities will be worth 5 points each and will not be able to be made up unless prior arrangement is made with the instructor.
4. **Child Language & cognition study / Final Presentation** – You will be required to select a child to do a language/cognition study over the duration of the semester. Details of this study will be outlined on a separate sheet of paper. You will also be required to present the highlights of this study in a presentation on the last days of class. The paper must be 6-10 pages in length and show at least 3 cited references. The presentation should be 15-20 minutes in length and detail the highlights so the class has a basic understanding of the child’s language and literacy abilities and its relationship to the child’s cognition. The paper will be graded according to the depth of writing, mechanics/grammar, and the connection between theory and practice.

Exceptionalities:

If you have emergency medical information to share with the instructor, if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, or if you need accommodations in the course because of a disability, please make an appointment with the instructor. My office location is Education 10 (in the “basement”) and the hours are as indicated at the beginning of the syllabus. If you plan to request disability accommodations, you are expected to register with the Disability Support Services (DSS) office. 190 McCannel Hall, 777-3425. You can see the DSS website at www.und.nodak.edu/dept/dss

Class Schedule:

Class 1: June 4

Introductions
 Syllabus and Assignment Review
 Theories of Language Development
 The uniqueness of Human Language Checking your knowledge

Student In Charge of Topic

Michael
 Michael

Class 2: June 6

Language Activity
Article discussion
 Stages of Language Development
 Music/Rhyme & language development (demo)

ALL
 Michael

Class 3: June 11

Paralinguistics/ an in class activity
 * Development of Communication in Infants

 * Parentese (Motherese) Is there a difference
 in how fathers & mothers talk with their children?
 How should parents talk with their children?

Michael

Class 4: June 13

Watch Video “For a Deaf Son”
 * The effects of hearing loss on language development
 Working with hearing impaired children
 * Sign language as means of communication for ALL children

Class 5: June 18

NO CLASS Work day... get going on child study and book review ... catch-up

Class 6: June 20

Listening skills, is it just accidental? How? Why/
 What is the relation between language and thought
 What came first: Language/or thought. Piaget VS Vygotsky
 (2 students: 1 cover Piaget 1 cover Vygotsky)

Michael

Class 7. June 25

Book discussion & presentation	ALL
Marie Clay's Writing principles	
Looking at children's letter formation and spelling stages	Michael
Phonemic Awareness	Michael

Class 8: June 27

Phonics Pros & Cons	Michael
Language and Culture What's the big deal?	Michael
ESL/ELL Should children be forced to forgo their native language?	

Class 9: July 2

Final Presentations – Each student will have 25-30 minutes to present findings
Final child study papers due **by** July 13

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me or to e-mail me. I will get back with you as soon as I can.

Please turn your cell phone off in class – if you need your phone on, please use the vibrate mode.

Thank you for being a part of this class.
Always remember: Talk, Play, & Read, Read, Read