RESEARCH TRENDS IN BILINGUAL EDUCATION/ ESL

BED 6300
CRN: 18131
Bilingual Education
University of Texas at El Paso
Fall 2016
EDUC 411

PROFESSOR
Alberto Esquinca, Ph.D.
Twitter: @aesquincam
Office hours: Tues, 3-5:30 pm
aesquinca@utep.edu
Ph: (915) 747-6426
Education Building, Room 805

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The field of bilingual education has historically drawn on second language acquisition concepts and theories. For instance, bilingual education teachers are trained in second language acquisition and the success of bilingual education programs is measured in terms of students’ acquisition of the second language.

However, the field is changing. For a few years, language and literacy researchers have become increasingly interested in bi-/multilingualism, and the field has turned. Researchers are today interrogating concepts such as “first” and “second” language and “native speaker” and “English Language Learner.” In this context, it is vitally important to grasp, interrogate and reconsider the underlying theories that have informed our field.

This course is meant to prepare researchers in language and literacy. In this course, you will explore theories of second language acquisition and development. Through learning activities and dialogue, you will be able to articulate a theoretical position to carry out your own research. You will become familiar with current research, with an eye to the historical and contemporary theoretical underpinnings of these research endeavors.

Student outcomes

1. To read and discuss a range of theoretical perspectives on language acquisition and development;
2. To critically interpret language and literacy research;
3. To apply theoretical concepts to explain observed language use.
Required books


Additional readings


ASSIGNMENTS

A. Weekly Reading Response (15% of your grade)
The purpose of this weekly assignment is to spark critical dialogue about the reading. The audience read the same thing as you, so you don’t have to summarize the reading. Instead, provide your perspective on or response to the reading.

*Guiding questions for the Weekly Reading Response*
- What is the main thesis of the piece?
- How does the theoretical framework account for your observations and/or experiences as a language user?
- How does the theoretical framework mesh with or counter other theoretical perspectives? How do you make sense of that?
- What did you learn from this piece? How were your perspectives challenged or changed by this piece, if at all?

*Procedure for Weekly Reading Response*
1. Bring a printed copy to class on the day they are scheduled for discussion. Be prepared to share your work with peers at the start of the class.
2. Offer your peer a critique of their writing. Did they identify a single theme? Is the representation of ideas accurate?
3. To improve your work, keep all the comments you receive

Note: If you are absent on a particular day, you may not turn in syntheses late for credit. However, you will write a meaning-making paper to make up the missed work. See the relevant section below.

**B. Research article presentation and paper (10% of your grade)**
The purpose of this assignment is to connect your reading of theories of language acquisition and development to methodologies used to study the topic associated with various theoretical frameworks. In addition, you will critique the studies. For this assignment, you will conduct library research to locate research studies that have drawn on a particular theoretical perspective. Look for the key names associated with theories in the assigned textbooks. Some of the research studies may be outdated and difficult to find, but that does not take away from the purpose of the assignment. If another student chooses the same theory, coordinate so that both of you don’t critique the same articles. You will choose at least two articles and present your critique on the day scheduled to discuss the theory. You will turn in a brief (4-5 page) paper

**C. Data collection plan (15%)**
The purpose of the assignment is to understand the ways in which theory and methodology are intertwined. Based on your theoretical perspective, devise a data collection plan for the purpose of documenting language acquisition and development. The plan will outline the data collection procedures you will undertake as well as the theoretical justification for the plan. To do this assignment, consult the literature, study about how authors write up their methodologies in the literature, talk about it in class, meet with me and ask a lot of questions. This plan will change as the semester goes on, but you will turn in a draft for feedback before you commence your case study.

**D. Weekly data collection log (15% of your grade)**
Once your data collection has been submitted, you can begin to gather data. The purpose of the log is for you to maintain detailed documentation of your data collection procedure. Each week, tell me what data you collected, how you collected it. Also, include a short reflection on the week’s activities. You will collect data for at least ten weeks.

**E. Case Study of a Language Learner (25% of your grade)**
The purpose of this assignment is for students to gain experience in researching language acquisition/development. You will recruit a language learner drawing on your personal contacts. There are two requirements for the participant. First, the learner’s proficiency must be at either beginning or intermediate level. Learners at a more advanced proficiency level will likely exhibit
growth at a more subtle level, which may be difficult to document in ten weeks. Second, the learner must a) consent to participate in this learning experience, b) agree that that the case study will not be disseminated publically, and c) understand that you are not yet an expert. She/he must also agree to donate the time and other resources to participate.

Note that this case study is not research insofar as it does not meet the federal definition of research with human participants, which crucially involves a systematic investigation to contribute to generalizable knowledge. Case studies, in this situation, are excluded from the definition of research, and no IRB approval is required.

For this assignment, you will write up a cohesive account of the case study, including the finalized data collection plan. The content includes a) introduction, b) theoretical framework, c) methodology, d) findings, e) discussion and conclusion. It will be written in APA style. You will be provided with examples of published case studies.

**F. Final paper (25% of your grade)**

The purpose of the final paper is for students to elaborate on their own stance regarding language acquisition/development. Students will make connections between their theories and concepts and their personal research projects. Students will draw on the multiple learning experiences during class—assigned readings, conversations, their case study, personal experiences. In addition to these, find 15-20 additional articles, books and resources to complement your work. They can be references you already have. The paper should be 10 to 15 pages long and is the culmination of your work throughout the semester. 10% of your grade for this assignment comes from your presentation.

### Summary of assignments (with due dates)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due date</th>
<th>% of final grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Reading Response</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research article presentation</td>
<td>Varies by choice of topic</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>and paper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Data collection plan</td>
<td>09/13/16</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection log</td>
<td>Weekly, beginning 9/20/16</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>11/29/16</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>12/06/16</td>
<td>25</td>
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### COURSE POLICIES

1. **Academic honesty.** Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any form of scholastic dishonesty is an affront to the pursuit of knowledge and jeopardizes the quality of the degree awarded to all graduates of UTEP. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty
includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are not attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) and available in the Office of the Dean of Students, may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to failing grades on the work in question, to failing grades in the course, to suspension or dismissal among others.

2. **Changes to the schedule.** It may become necessary to make changes to the schedule to suit student interests and/or to accommodate for any unexpected issues. Any changes to the schedule of readings and assignments will be posted on the course Blackboard site and discussed in class.

3. **Late work.** Students are expected to turn in their work by the stated deadline. It includes weekly syntheses with them to each class. No late work is accepted.

4. **Attendance and participation.** Attendance is required for every class meeting, and you are expected to arrive on time and remain for the duration of each class. However, because unexpected events do occur, you are allowed **ONE** absence before your grade is affected. Please reserve your absence for an emergency. Two absences will **lower your grade.** Three absences is considered excessive, and you **will be dropped.** It is the student’s responsibility to catch up after an absence. Participation is graded based on the quality of your contributions to class discussion, your preparedness to discuss readings, and the opportunities you take to lead academic classroom discussions.

5. **Making up work missed due to an absence.** In the event that you must be absent, you are expected to make up your work, regardless of it being excused or not. The synthesis for that week will not be accepted. Instead, you are expected to write a 500-700 word *Meaning Making Paper* in which you: (1) Summarize the major points of the session (use PPT); (2) Re-construct the week’s discussion (via notes from a peer and information from me); (3) Reflect on what the ideas mean to you as a scholar. Turn it in the week you return. **If you turn it in late (or not at all), your grade will be affected.**

6. **Incomplete.** A grade of incomplete will not be given for this course unless there are extenuating circumstances. Please talk to the professor ASAP if such a situation arises. In any case, incompletes will be given only if a student has passed the first half of the course and provides evidence of a documented illness or family crisis which genuinely precludes successful completion of the course.

7. **Accommodations.** If you have or believe you have a disability, you may wish to self-identify. You can do so by providing documentation to the Office of disabled Student Services located in Union E Room 203. Students who have been designated as disabled must reactivate their standing with the Office of Disabled Student Services on a yearly basis. Failure to report to this office will place a student on the inactive list and nullify benefits received. If you have a condition which may affect your ability to exit safely from the premises in an emergency or which may cause an emergency during class, you are
encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of Disabled Student Services. You may call 747-5148 for general information about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**SCHEDULE (subject to change, if necessary)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week (Date)</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read before class</th>
<th>Assignment due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (08/23)</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 (08/30)</td>
<td>Foundational issues; early theories</td>
<td>Chs. 1, 2, 3, 13 in VanPatten &amp; Williams (Eds.)</td>
<td>Reading response</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 (09/06)</td>
<td>Skills acquisition; mind as computer</td>
<td>Chs. 4-7 in VanPatten &amp; Williams (Eds.)</td>
<td>Reading response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (09/13)</td>
<td>Contemporary theories</td>
<td>Chs. 8, 9, 10, 12 in VanPatten &amp; Williams (Eds.)</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (09/20)</td>
<td>SCT: Foundational issues</td>
<td>Chs. 1-3 in Lantolf &amp; Thorne</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection log #1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (09/27)</td>
<td>SCT: symbolic mediation</td>
<td>Chs. 4-5 in Lantolf &amp; Thorne</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection log #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (10/04)</td>
<td>SCT: internalization</td>
<td>Chs. 6-7 in Lantolf &amp; Thorne</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection log #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (10/11)</td>
<td>SCT: activity theory</td>
<td>Chs. 8-9 in Lantolf &amp; Thorne</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection log #4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 (10/18)</td>
<td>SCT: ZPD, pedagogy</td>
<td>Chs. 10-12 in Lantolf &amp; Thorne</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection log #5</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 (10/25)</td>
<td>Languaging and trans-languaging</td>
<td>Chs. 1-2 in García &amp; Li Wei</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection log #6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 (11/01)</td>
<td>Translanguaging &amp; education</td>
<td>Chs. 3-4 in García &amp; Li Wei</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection log #7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (11/08)</td>
<td>Languaging to learn</td>
<td>Chs. 5-6 in García &amp; Li Wei</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection log #8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (11/15)</td>
<td>Language and pedagogy</td>
<td>Chs. 7-8 in García &amp; Li Wei</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection log #9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (11/22)</td>
<td>Preparation for the case study write up</td>
<td>3 CASE STUDIES TBD</td>
<td>Reading response, Data collection log #10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 (11/29)</td>
<td>Preparation for final</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Case study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 (12/06)</td>
<td>Culmination and closing</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Final paper and final presentation</td>
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