BED 5320: Language Policy in Education
FALL 2024

Instructor: Dr. Katherine S. Mortimer
Associate Professor of Bilingual/Biliteracy Education
Email: ksmortimer@utep.edu
Office hours: Wed 12-2pm (Zoom) by appointment
Text: Remind (class code @XXXXXXX)

COURSE INFORMATION
BED 5320-001: Language Policy in Education [CRN 15357)]
3 credit hours, online | October 21-December 9

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course focuses on educational language policy (ELP)—or policy about the use and instruction of languages in learning contexts—and specifically, how we can advance educational equity by critically examining and thoughtfully changing the ways we use and teach language in teaching and learning. We explore ELP as not just official policy texts, but also everyday decisions about language use and language practices themselves. We examine the use of language policy as an instrument of control and as an instrument of empowerment, and throughout the course we pay special attention to educators' roles as arbiters of educational language policy and as actors with agency to effect change.

DRIVING QUESTION FOR THE COURSE

How can we advance educational equity by critically examining and thoughtfully planning and changing the ways we use and teach language in education?

COURSE OVERVIEW

Week	Topic
1	What is language policy? ELP as instrument of power and empowerment
2	What is language? What are language ideologies?
3	Teachers as policymakers
4	Monoglossic ELP: The cases of standardized testing and English-only policies
5	Heteroglossic ELP: The case of translanguaging in assessment
6	ELP for equity in dual language bilingual education
7/8	Family LP and schools

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this course you will

1. Explore conceptualizations of policy, implementation, and of language itself;
2. Identify language ideologies and their role in ELP design and implementation;
3. Examine educational language policies as instruments of control as well as instruments of empowerment;
4. Analyze educators' roles as policy makers and appropriators in classrooms and schools;
5. Analyze both monoglossic and heteroglossic ELPs to identify ideological/ implementational spaces in which multilingualism and multilingual learners can thrive;
6. Interrogate inequity in dual language bilingual education and identify language policy solutions; and
7. Use the educational language policy engagement and action research (ELPEAR) process to plan equitable ELP creation in an educational context.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Johnson, D.C. (2013). *Language Policy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Available through UTEP Library.

All other readings and materials are available through Blackboard in the weekly folders. All materials will be open-access or accessible through the UTEP Library—NO PURCHASES ARE REQUIRED.

ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly discussions **10 points each x 7 weeks, 29% of grade**

Educational research shows that our deepest and most meaningful learning happens in interaction with other people. Our weekly class discussions via Blackboard are the heart of that interaction in this course. Many will occur in small groups in order to support richer interaction among members. The goals are (1) for you to demonstrate your knowledge of the readings, and (2) to deepen that knowledge through writing your post and responding to others' posts.

By Friday of each week, you will write an initial post (200-300 words in total) responding to prompts about the readings. Prompts will ask you to make connections between readings and/or apply concepts from the readings to real-world cases in the readings and in your own experience. Your post should include specific details and/or refer to specific places in the readings to support your answers. Some discussions will have multiple questions or components, so please check to be sure that you respond to everything!

Then by Sunday of each week you will respond to at least 2 classmates' posts (100 words for each response). Responses should refer to a specific idea in the original post, refer to specific details in the readings, and ask a question, make a suggestion, or otherwise push the original poster to consider another side or additional point about the topic.

FORMAT: Please type directly into the discussion submission box or copy and paste. Please do not submit Word doc files to discussions (however, please note that Word doc files are requested for assignments).

ELP observation and description — 50 points, 20% of grade

A core theme of our course is that educational language policy is created and appropriated at all levels, that it is made up of official texts, ideologies, and everyday practices. In this assignment you will observe and describe ELP in a real-world classroom context that you select and have access to and that includes multilingual learners. The goal of the assignment is for you to gain experience identifying the components of ELP in the real world and applying concepts from the course to what you see.

In completing this assignment you will conduct a 1 hour observation of language practices, ask a responsible adult (e.g., teacher, supervisor) some brief questions, and collect documents or other information available through websites. This is an educational exercise only and should not be considered research. You will synthesize this information in a written paper (5 pages maximum) that describes language policy and practices in this context using concepts from the course. Additional guidelines will be provided via BB.

FORMAT: Please submit a Word doc file for this assignment.

ELP practice brief — 50 points, 20% of grade

A practice brief is a short, accessible paper for an audience of teachers that shows how theory can be implemented in teaching practice. You will write a practice brief with showing how theory and concepts in ELP scholarship could be implemented in concrete terms in schools to support multilingualism and multilingual learners. The goal of this assignment is for you to demonstrate your understanding of ELP theory by making it accessible to a educator audience and identifying specific actions that can be taken by educators to open ideological/ implementational spaces for multilingualism. The brief will be 1-2 pages. Additional guidelines will be provided via BB.

FORMAT: Please submit a Word doc file for this assignment.

Action research proposal for classroom ELP — 75 points, 31% of grade

Two key ideas of this course are that explicit educational language policy (ELP) can be used for empowerment of minoritized language speakers, and that educators and community members are language policy makers. These ideas come together in educational language policy engagement and action research or ELPEAR, as described in Johnson (2013), and ELPEAR is a way that teachers can collaborate to study and reflect on ELP in their context and make changes that support multilingualism and multilingual learners. In this culminating assignment for the course, you will use your knowledge of ELP theory, practice, and research to design and propose an ELPEAR project that could be conducted in your own teaching context or one that you are familiar with. Additional guidelines will be provided via BB.

FORMAT: Please submit a Word doc file for this assignment.

Summary of components of the course grade

Assignment	Points each	How many	Total points	% of grade
Weekly class discussions	10	7	70	29%
ELP observation and description	50	1	50	20%
ELP practice brief	50	1	50	20%
Action research proposal	75	1	75	31%
		Total	245	100%

Grading Scale

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
F = 59 and below

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Inclusiveness and equity

Learning happens only when we feel respected as a whole human being. My top priority in our course is to cultivate relationships of trust and respect and a sense that we see each other as whole, complex human beings. That you experience this in our course is important for the sake of your learning in this class *and* for the sake of your students' learning. To that end, I want you to know that all of you is welcome in our spaces of interaction—all the parts of you as a person are welcome in our discussions, our assignments, and in our assessments. We are all complex people with a variety of perspectives, experiences, challenges, and resources—our gender identities, our sexual orientations, our religions, our races, our ethnicities, our economic statuses, our immigration statuses, our parenthoods, our veteran statuses, our ages, our languages, our abilities and disabilities. All the parts of you are welcome in our learning community to the extent that you feel comfortable bringing them in. I strive to show respect for the variety and wholeness in each of you, and I expect that each of you shows respect for each other as well. If you feel marginalized in our course, and you feel comfortable discussing it, I would like to know so that I can support you, protect you, and make changes that feel more inclusive and equitable. You can also talk with our Department Chair, Dr. Alyse Hachey, 915-747-7573 or ahachey@utep.edu, and/or you can report a complaint of discrimination to the University's Equal Opportunity Office, Kelly Hall, Third Floor, 915-747-5662 or eoaa@utep.edu.

Support services available to you

Learning happens only when our bodies and minds are well—and all of us occasionally face challenges to wellness that interfere with our learning. I want you to be aware of a variety of support services—both personal and academic—at UTEP that can help you navigate these challenges and obstacles.

- University Writing Center (provides assistance with writing style, formatting, writing tutoring, online sessions available)
- Counseling and Psychological Services (provides many mental health supports free of charge, online resources available)
- UTEP Food Pantry (provides non-perishable food items, Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm)

And a good first stop is the Division of Student Affairs' UTEP Student Helpful Resources page. If you are facing an obstacle to your learning, I encourage you to check out these resources or let me know and I will help you find the supports you need. YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

Language policy for this course

You are encouraged to use and develop your biliteracy skills in this course and to experiment with language policy making through your languaging practices. You may submit the LP observation, practice brief, and action research proposal assignments in English, Spanish, or any combination of the two. For class discussions, the most important criterion is that everyone has an opportunity to understand and to be understood. Contributions to discussions are welcome in Spanish or English or both, and the members of the group are asked to use your collective linguistic repertoires to attend to and facilitate everyone's understanding. As part of our work we will revisit and revise this policy as necessary.

Guidance on using artificial intelligence in the course

You are welcome to use generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (specifically, AI chatbots like ChatGPT and Bard) for tasks that enhance your learning: for example, clarifying terminology ("What is hegemony?") or outlining an assignment. Please do not use these tools in any way that inhibits your learning (for example, submitting AI-composed text instead of your own writing). I encourage you to include a statement on any written work where you have used AI to enhance your learning stating how you used it. This practice helps all of us to become familiar with the variety of ways that AI can be used to enhance learning without harming it.

Academic citations

Please provide APA-style in-text AND reference list citations whenever referencing others' work in ALL your written assignments. See the Purdue Online Writing Lab APA Style Guide for guidance (link also on BB). I also encourage you to use bibliographic software such as RefWorks (free) to manage your sources as you move through your graduate studies.

Changes to the syllabus

I strive to respond in my teaching to the sometimes-shifting conditions of our class community: current events, our discussions, our interests, our extant experiences, our needs for growth. Some changes may be made to the syllabus along the way. You will always be notified—or asked to participate in the decision to make changes—and, for significant changes, the updated syllabus will be made available on Blackboard. All versions have a version number in the header with the format of year, month, day (e.g., 241021 for 2024, October 21).

Different abilities and accommodations

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

Academic integrity

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline.