

**University of Texas at El Paso  
College of Education  
Department of Teacher Education  
Division of STEM Education**

**Spring 2023**

|                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| <b><u>Course</u></b>  | <b>STEM6319 (Hybrid)</b>     |
| <b><u>Topic</u></b>   | <b>Vygotsky and Pedagogy</b> |
| <b><u>Credits</u></b> | <b>3-0</b>                   |

**Course Description**

This course examines and analyzes Vygotskian educational theory in cultural context. The course discusses in detail Vygotskian major work *Thought and Language* (1962), *Mind in Society* (1978) and other publications with regards to his key pedagogical ideas of mediation, scaffolding, ZPD, cultural-historical perspective, learning and development, to name a few. The course engages students in extensive reading and writing through authentic scholarly assignments such as systematic search, critique, and peer-review.

**Contact Information**

Instructor: *Mourat A. Tchoshanov*  
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Office: EDU612

Office Hours: W 5:00-5:30PM & 8:20-8:50PM  
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**Office Hours** online via a video conferencing tool Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate.

**Required Readings**

Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and Language*. Ed. Alex Kozulin, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition. MIT Press. Cambridge: MA.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Eds. Michael Cole, et al. Harvard University Press. Cambridge: MA.

**Recommended Reading**

Zawacki-Richter, O., Kerres, M., Bedenlier, S., Bond, M., Buntins, K. (2020). *Systematic Reviews in Educational Research: Methodology, Perspectives, and Application*. Springer.

Other readings will be distributed during class sessions and posted on the Blackboard. The readings are also available via UTEP Library.

**Additional Bibliography** could be found in the bibliography sections of the required readings.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students should be able:

- To examine and analyze Vygotskian educational theory in cultural context.
- To read and discuss Vygotskian major work *Thought and Language* (1962), *Mind in Society* (1978) and other publications.
- To reflect on Vygotskian key pedagogical ideas of mediation, scaffolding, ZPD, cultural-historical perspective, learning and development, to name a few.
- To conduct systematic search, review, and critique main constructs of Vygotskian sociocultural theory.

### **Course Activities**

Main course activities will be distributed throughout the semester and will include but are not limited to *the book club* format of reading and discussion of Vygotskian major work *Thought and Language* (1962), *Mind in Society* (1978) and other publications with regards to his key pedagogical ideas of mediation, scaffolding, ZPD, cultural-historical perspective, learning and development, to name a few. The course will use authentic scholarly assignments such as systematic review, critique, and annotated bibliography (if needed).

### **Course Communication**

Since this is a hybrid course, contact will be limited to electronic communication. There are various ways we can keep "in touch":

- Via video conferencing during my Office Hours (stated at the beginning of this syllabus).
- Via email (also shown at the beginning of the syllabus).
- Via the Individual Conferencing by demand. I will check frequently to provide feedback and answer your inquiries.

I will be checking my e-mail and the Blackboard once a day, and my responses shouldn't take more than 48 hours. This provides me with enough time to answer all your questions, so do take this into consideration.

### **Course Assignments**

1. **Participation/ Discussion:** each student will contribute to the book club discussion related to main course readings.
2. **Critique** (18-20 pages, double spaced, APA style, Word): each student will write critiques addressing on assigned course readings. There will be two critiques, one on each of the required texts *Thought and Language* and *Mind in Society*.
3. **Systematic Review Paper** (22-25 pages, double spaced, APA style, Word): each student will write a systematic review on selected constructs of Vygotskian theory: mediation, scaffolding, ZPD, cultural-historical perspective, learning and development, etc.
4. **Systematic Review Presentation:** each student will present key findings of the systematic search as a Power Point Presentation.

## Course Schedule

| <b>Week</b>     | <b>Activities</b>   | <b>Assignments/<br/>Submissions</b>             |
|-----------------|---|---|
| 1.<br>Jan. 18   | Introduction and Syllabus Review  | Introduction Card                               |
| 2.<br>Jan. 25   | <b>Book club-1.1:</b> Reading and discussion of <i>Mind in Society</i> , Part 1: Basic Theory and Data                          |   |
| 3.<br>Feb. 1    | <b>Book club-1.2:</b> Reading and discussion of <i>Mind in Society</i> , Part 2: Educational Implications                       |   |
| 4.<br>Feb. 8    | Individual Conferencing by Demand   | Critique-1 Submission                           |
| 5.<br>Feb. 15   | <b>Book club-2.1:</b> Reading and discussion of <i>Thought and Language</i> , Parts 1, 2, 3                                     |   |
| 6.<br>Feb. 22   | <b>Book club-2.2:</b> Reading and discussion of <i>Thought and Language</i> , Parts 4, 5  |   |
| 7.<br>March 1   | <b>Book club-2.3:</b> Reading and discussion of <i>Thought and Language</i> , Parts 6, 7  |   |
| 8.<br>March 8   | Individual Conferencing by Demand   | Critique-2 Submission                           |
| 9.<br>March 15  | Spring break  |   |
| 10.<br>March 22 | <b>Book club-3:</b> Systematic Reviews in Educational Research, Part 2.1: Conceptualizations and Measures of Student Engagement |   |
| 11.<br>March 29 | Individual Conferencing by Demand   |   |
| 12.<br>April 5  | Individual Conferencing by Demand   |   |
| 13.<br>April 12 | Individual Conferencing by Demand   |   |
| 14.<br>April 19 | Individual Conferencing by Demand   |   |
| 15.<br>April 26 | Individual Conferencing by Demand   |   |
| 16.<br>May 3    | <b>Systematic Review Presentation</b>   | Systematic Review PP<br>Systematic Review Paper |

## Grade Distribution

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Critiques                      | 2 critiques x 20 points each = 40 points |
| Systematic Review Presentation | 20 points                                |
| Systematic Review Paper        | 30 points                                |
| Participation                  | 10 points                                |

## Grading Scale

You are encouraged to demonstrate *knowledge of content, critical thinking, and communication accuracy* while completing major course assignments.

91 - 100 = **A**    81– 90 = **B**    71 - 80 = **C**    61 - 70 = **D**    00 - 60 = **F**

## How to Write a Critique

To write a critique/review of a text is to analyze and evaluate it, not just summarize or synthesize. A summary merely reports what the text said; that is, it answers only the question, "What did the author say?" A critique, on the other hand, analyzes, interprets, and evaluates the text, answering the questions How? Why? and How Well? A critique does not necessarily have to criticize the piece in a negative sense. Your reaction to the text may be largely positive, negative, or a combination of the two. It is important to explain why you respond to the text in a certain way.

So, the critique is a rigorous critical reading of a text (e.g., article, chapter, passage). Thus, the critique's value as an academic document rests on your ability to say precisely why you agree or disagree. The structure of the critique may include the following main parts:

- **An introduction** which introduces the passage and its author. The introduction should also provide your reader with a little background so that he or she will understand why this critique is worth reading. What do you know about the issue under discussion? Is it of current or historical interest? Is it at the heart of a controversy? These details can strengthen your introduction. At the end of the introduction, you should *clearly state the point(s) you are to critique* and the arguments you intend to make about it.
- **A brief summary.** You should already have drafted a summary. Now you can include it in your draft of your critique, making sure to use adequate transitions so that *the writing flows smoothly*.
- **Your analysis** of the author's presentation of the selected point(s). Present an in-depth analysis of the validity of the author's logic and use of evidence in supporting the selected point(s). Be sure to present your information in a form, which is easy to follow, using *transitional elements* whenever necessary to preserve the *smooth flow of your writing*.
- **Your own response to the argument.** As discussed above, you may agree or disagree with the author's point(s), and this is the part of the critique where you make your own views on the point(s) clear. Remember that your own arguments must be well-supported through the extensive use of *references, evidence and/or logic*. You must give compelling reasons for your

agreement or disagreement with the author. Discuss the limitations, weaknesses, or problems of the text.

- **A conclusion.** Synthesize your critique. Evaluate the author's overall success or failure in achieving his or her point(s). Also, remind your reader of the strengths and weaknesses of the paper.

Once the critique is drafted, revise it, making sure you have emphasized the most salient points in your discussion. Check your sentence variety, your organization, and your word choice. Is the critique all it can be? Have you edited the critique to eliminate errors in spelling, sentence structure, and agreement?

### **How to Write a Systematic Review**

(Based on Shaun Turney post on Scribbr.com, December 7, 2022).

A systematic review is a type of review that uses repeatable methods to find, select, and synthesize all available evidence. It answers a clearly formulated research question and explicitly states the methods used to arrive at the answer. Systematic reviews typically answer research question by synthesizing all available evidence and evaluating the quality of the evidence. Synthesizing means bringing together different information to tell a single, cohesive story. The synthesis can be narrative (qualitative), quantitative, or both.

To conduct a systematic review, first, you'll need a precise question, usually about the effectiveness of an intervention. The question needs to be about a topic that's previously been studied by multiple researchers. If there's no previous research, there's nothing to review. Access to databases and journal archives. Often, your educational institution provides you with access. Then you need time: a professional systematic review is a time-consuming process. Next, you bibliographic, word-processing, spreadsheet, and statistical software. For example, you could use EndNote, Microsoft Word, Excel, and SPSS.

A systematic review has many pros. They minimize research bias by considering all available evidence and evaluating each study for bias. Their methods are transparent, so they can be scrutinized by others. They are thorough: they summarize all available evidence. They can be replicated and updated by others. Systematic reviews also have a few cons. They're time-consuming. They're narrow in scope: they only answer the precise research question.

#### Step-by-step systematic review

Step 1: Formulate a research question. Formulating the research question is probably the most important step of a systematic review.

Step 2: Develop a protocol. A protocol is a document that contains your research plan for the systematic review. This is an important step because having a plan allows you to work more efficiently and reduces bias. Your protocol should include the following components:

- **Background information:** Provide the context of the research question, including why it's important.
- **Research objective(s):** Rephrase your research question as an objective.
- **Proposed methods**
- **Selection criteria:** State how you'll decide which studies to include or exclude from your review.
- **Search strategy:** Discuss your plan for finding studies.

- **Analysis:** Explain what information you'll collect from the studies and how you'll synthesize the data.

**Step 3: Search for all relevant studies.** Searching for relevant studies is the most time-consuming step of a systematic review. To reduce bias, it's important to search for relevant studies very thoroughly. Your strategy will depend on your field and your research question, but sources generally fall into these categories:

- **Databases:** Search multiple databases of peer-reviewed literature, such as EBSCO, ERIC. Think carefully about how to phrase your search terms and include multiple synonyms of each word. Use Boolean operators if relevant.

- **Handsearching:** In addition to searching the primary sources using databases, you'll also need to search manually. One strategy is to scan relevant journals or conference proceedings. Another strategy is to scan the reference lists of relevant studies.

- **Gray literature:** Gray literature includes documents produced by governments, universities, and other institutions that aren't published by traditional publishers. Graduate student theses are an important type of gray literature, which you can search using the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD).

**Step 4: Apply the selection criteria.** You should apply the selection criteria in two phases:

- **Based on the titles and abstracts:** Decide whether each article potentially meets the selection criteria based on the information provided in the abstracts.

- **Based on the full texts:** Download the articles that weren't excluded during the first phase. If an article isn't available online or through your library, you may need to contact the authors to ask for a copy. Read the articles and decide which articles meet the selection criteria.

It's very important to keep a meticulous record of why you included or excluded each article.

**Step 5: Extract the data.** Extracting the data means collecting information from the selected studies in a systematic way. There are two types of information you need to collect from each study:

- **Information about the study's methods and results.** The exact information will depend on your research question, but it might include the year, study design, sample size, context, research findings, and conclusions. If any data are missing, you'll need to contact the study's authors.

- **Your judgment of the quality of the evidence, including risk of bias.**

You should collect this information using forms. You can find sample forms in *The Registry of Methods and Tools for Evidence-Informed Decision Making and the Grading of Recommendations, Assessment, Development and Evaluations Working Group*.

**Step 6: Synthesize the data.** Synthesizing the data means bringing together the information you collected into a single, cohesive story. There are two main approaches to synthesizing the data:

- **Narrative (qualitative):** Summarize the information in words. You'll need to discuss the studies and assess their overall quality.

- **Quantitative:** Use statistical methods to summarize and compare data from different studies. The most common quantitative approach is a meta-analysis, which allows you to combine results from multiple studies into a summary result.

Generally, you should use both approaches together whenever possible. If you don't have enough data, or the data from different studies aren't comparable, then you can take just a narrative approach. However, you should justify why a quantitative approach wasn't possible.

Step 7: Write and publish a report. The purpose of writing a systematic review article is to share the answer to your research question and explain how you arrived at this answer. Your article should include the following sections:

- Abstract: A summary of the review
- Introduction: Including the rationale and objectives
- Methods: Including the selection criteria, search method, data extraction method, and synthesis method
- Results: Including results of the search and selection process, study characteristics, risk of bias in the studies, and synthesis results
- Discussion: Including interpretation of the results and limitations of the review
- Conclusion: The answer to your research question and implications for practice, policy, or research.

Once your report is written, you can publish it in a systematic review database, such as the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, and/or in a peer-reviewed journal.

### **Rubrics**

| <b>Criteria</b>                                | <b>Good</b>  | <b>Fair</b>  | <b>Poor</b>  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Knowledge of Content</b>                    | Solid knowledge and understanding of the issue to be critiqued is demonstrated. The article is clearly but succinctly summarized - the key points of the article are addressed.                                      | Good knowledge and understanding of the issue to be critiqued is demonstrated. The article is clearly summarized, but some sub points are addressed along with main points. The summary is not succinct. | Weak knowledge and understanding of the issue to be critiqued is demonstrated. The article summary is unclear or overly detailed.  |
| <b>Critical Thinking and Argumentation</b>     | Strengths and weaknesses that are central to the key points of the article are addressed. The discussion of strengths and weaknesses take up the majority of the assignment.   | Strengths and weaknesses that are peripheral to the article are addressed. The discussion of strengths and weaknesses take up the majority of the assignment.  | Strengths and weaknesses are addressed peripherally or not at all. The discussion of strengths and weaknesses take up only a small part of the assignment.   |
| <b>Organization and Communication Accuracy</b> | Paper is well organized, has a very clear intro, body and conclusion. The purpose of the paper is clear from the very beginning. There are no grammatical errors or typos. APA and page length requirements are met. | Paper is organized, has an intro, body and conclusion. The purpose of the paper becomes clear within the paper. There are few grammatical errors or typos. APA and page length requirements are met.     | Paper is not well organized, has an unclear or non-existent intro, body and conclusion. The purpose of the paper is unclear. There are many grammatical errors and/or typos. APA and page length requirements are not met. |

### **Academic Integrity**

The instructor trusts that you understand and especially appreciate that cheating, plagiarism and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts, which erode the university's purpose and integrity. It is expected

that work you submit will represent your own effort, will not involve copying from or accessing unauthorized resources or people (e.g., from a previous year's class), and will appropriately acknowledge (with complete citations) allowable references that you do consult. Also, do not resubmit work completed for other classes without specific acknowledgment and permission from the instructor. Violations are unacceptable and required to be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action.

### **Copyright Notice**

Many of the materials that are posted within this course are protected by copyright law. These materials are only for the use of students enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further retained or disseminated.

### **Professionalism**

Along with basic standards of citizenship (e.g., "Student Conduct" and "Disruptive Acts Policy" in the UTEP *Catalog*), students in this course are required to display a positive attitude and professionalism. Be open to using or sharing opportunities for professional growth via Discussion Board option. In terms of written assignments, professionalism includes that all assignments be Word processed, checked for spelling/ grammar, and have any appropriate output/ graphics electronically pasted into the document. Use the netiquette's guidelines and recommended practices for online communications (e.g., be respectful, think before you post, stay on topic, write clearly, use appropriate language and style, be considerate of others, allow for misunderstandings, cite your sources).

### **ADA Statement**

In Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if a student needs an accommodation, then the Office of Disabled Student Services located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Disabled Student Services. You may call (915)747-5148 for general information about the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you have as a UTEP student with a disability. Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and the UTEP Disabled Student Services Office.

### **Equal Educational Opportunity Statement**

In order to create equal educational opportunities in the class, all students are expected to demonstrate respect for the diverse voices and individual differences in the class. Particularly, no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored or conducted by the University of Texas at El Paso on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, disability, or sexual orientation. Any member of the University community who engages in discrimination or other conduct in violation of University policy is subject to the full range of disciplinary action, up to and including separation from the University. Complaints regarding discrimination should be reported to the University's Equal Opportunity Office. Inquiries regarding applicable policies should be addressed to the University's Equal Opportunity Office, Kelly Hall (915)747-5662 or [eoaa@utep.edu](mailto:eoaa@utep.edu).