H811G: LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN LINGUISTICALLY AND CULTURALLY DIVERSE CLASSROOMS

TEACHING TEAM: Emily Phillips Galloway  
Shireen Al-Adeimi

CLASS MEETINGS: Fall 2015, 1st half  
Mondays, 2-4  
7 sessions

OVERVIEW:  
Students entering classrooms bring a range of language experiences, whether as speakers of a language other than the language of instruction or of a non-mainstream dialect/language variety. This linguistic diversity presents both challenges and opportunities. This course will examine the intersection between language use, instructional tasks and texts, and the development of language and literacy for linguistically/culturally diverse learners. Guided by the research in sociolinguistics and education, this course will examine how language develops in relation to the cultural and social contexts of home, school and community. Given our specific focus on school-based literacy development, we will place an emphasis on examining the challenges and possibilities of bi- or multi-lingual or bi- or multi-dialectal students as they learn to comprehend the language of school texts. In this module, we will address the following critical questions: What is the role of culture and language in shaping students’ acquisition of school-relevant literacy skills? How can practitioners and school leaders support culturally and linguistically diverse learners to attain school literacy skills while continuing to develop language skills that support social communication?

CLASS SESSIONS:  
The first sessions will discuss school language from multiple perspectives: as conventionalized (though ever-changing) system of communication; as a method for communicating a social identity and for participating in various communities; and as a powerful tool for (engaging) in discourses of power. In the latter half of this module, we will discuss various methods for teaching academic language, while valuing students’ identities and cultures in the K-12 setting. We will discuss different models of instruction (bilingual/multilingual models; bidialectal instruction) in U.S. schools and in some international settings (Canada, Australia, South Africa.)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:  
In the course, students will be challenged to examine their beliefs about their own language and the language of the students they may teach as part of developing a personal philosophy to guide teaching in linguistically- and culturally-diverse settings. As central learning goals we hope to equip students with: (1) a better understanding of the challenges and possibilities posed by linguistically diverse classrooms, and (2) strategies for supporting linguistic diversity in the classroom as an educator, administrator or informed citizen.

ASSESSMENTS:  
Assignments will include a reflective memo about students’ own language learning history and/or perceptions of language, and a final paper that will allow students to select a topic from the course to either generate a research paper, professional development module, or classroom unit. In addition, each student will have an opportunity to lead one opening discussion on the week’s readings hosted weekly on the course-site.
COURSE ELEMENTS

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND DISCUSSION (15%)
Students are expected to attend each class session and actively participate in class. To do so, students must complete the readings, reflect on the materials, and come to class on time and prepared for active discussion and group work.

ONLINE DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP & PARTICIPATION (25%)
Students will work in groups to lead the class in an online discussion on a topic from each week’s readings. Each group will prepare a set of discussion questions in advance of the class, post these to the course site, and will facilitate a short online discussion on those topics in the week leading up to the class session. Additionally, each student will need to complete 5 posts in response to their peers’ discussion questions.

LANGUAGE REFLECTION MEMO (20%)
In the first half of the class, students will have the opportunity to critically reflect upon their own language learning experience and/or their perception of language. Students will incorporate readings and materials from the first week of class to engage in a reflection on their history, assumptions, and beliefs about language. Memos should be between 5-7 pages, double-spaced, and are due at midnight on Friday, 9/11/2015.

FINAL ASSIGNMENT PROPOSAL (10%)
Students will submit a proposal that outlines their final assignment plan and will receive feedback from the teaching team. Final assignment proposals should be no more than a page, double-spaced, and are due at midnight on Friday, 10/23/2015.

FINAL ASSIGNMENT (30%)
The final assignment will allow students to select a topic from the course to produce a research paper (including a review of the literature or a study proposal), a classroom unit, or a professional development module. These projects can take multiple forms, including digital media (e.g. videos, webinars, websites, etc.) Final assignments are due on Friday, 11/6/2015 at midnight.

FINAL COURSE REQUIREMENT
Completion of online course evaluations will be the final requirement of the course.

IMPORTANT DATES

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<tr>
<th>Module Dates</th>
<th>Mondays: 9/2, 9/14, 9/21, 9/28, 10/5, 10/19, 10/26</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Memo</td>
<td>Friday, 9/11/2015 (midnight)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Assignment Proposal</td>
<td>Friday, 10/23/2015 (midnight)</td>
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<td>Final Assignment</td>
<td>Friday, 11/6/2015 (midnight)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation and Online Discussions</td>
<td>Throughout; 6 online discussions</td>
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## Session 1: Wednesday, 9/2/2015
### Linguistic Diversity: A Primer and a Call to Action

**Guiding Questions:** What is ‘linguistic diversity’? Why do our own and our students’ linguistic histories matter?

**Readings:**

**Optional:**

**Media:**
- What is a Language?
- What is a Dialect?

## Friday, 9/11/2015 (Midnight): Reflection Memo Due

## Session 2: Monday, 9/14/2015
### Non-Mainstream Dialect Speakers

**Guiding Questions:** How do dialect differences shape academic identities and literacy skills?

**Readings:**

**Media:**
- African American Vernacular English: A Case Study of Springville
- The Origins of ‘Standard’ Broadcast English
- Languages, Registers and Dialects: A Linguistic Terminology Primer
### Session 3: Monday, 9/21/2015

**Supporting Non-Mainstream Dialect Speakers**

**Guiding Questions:** How can teachers support non-mainstream dialect speakers in classrooms?

**Readings:**

**Preview Model Lessons (on IPAC):**

**Media:**
- [Code-Switching (Interviews with Georgetown Undergrads)](#)
- [Language & Social Class in Haiti](#)

### Session 4: Monday, 9/28/2015

**Bilingual, Multilingual, and Heritage Speakers**

**Guiding Questions:** How do social constructions of bi- and multilingualism impact language learning? How can educators support students who are acquiring more than one language?

**Readings:**

**Please select 1:**

**Please select 1:**

**Please select 1:**


**Media:**
- [Aboriginal Kindergarten Instruction: A Case Study of Queensland](#)
- [Aboriginal Kindergartener Instruction: A Case Study of Queensland II](#)
- [Bilingual Development in Children: A Brief Introduction](#)
- [Linguistic Transfer: Phonology & Syntax](#)
# SESSION 5: MONDAY, 10/5/2015

**Academic Language and Linguistics at School**

**Guiding Questions:** What is academic language? How do we help support multidialectal and multilingual students’ academic language development across subject areas?

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<td><em>The Linguistics Olympiad (Ireland)</em></td>
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# SESSION 6: MONDAY, 10/19/2015

**The Role of Teachers in Supporting Language Learning**

**Guiding Questions:** What role can educators play? How do our attitudes and linguistic histories impact our instruction?

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<td><em>Intentional Teaching (Kindergarten Example)</em></td>
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<td><em>Bilingual Education (ASL/English)-Use Subtitles</em></td>
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Friday, 10/23/2015 (Midnight): Final Assignment Proposal Due
SESSION 7: MONDAY, 10/26/2015
REIMAGINING TEACHER EDUCATION TO PREPARE EDUCATORS
GUIDING QUESTIONS: How can we prepare teachers to effectively teach culturally and linguistically diverse learners?

READINGS:


BACKGROUND REFERENCES


ADDITIONAL MEDIA: