

**UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
COLLEGE PARK  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction**

**EDCI 730  
Theory and Research in Second Language Teaching, Learning**

**Michael Wei, Ph.D.**  
Syllabus

Wednesday  
4:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

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**Course Description:**

This course covers both second language learning theories and second language research and design. It will also contain a survey of both qualitative and quantitative research literature.

**Course Purpose/ Objectives:**

EDCI 730 is devoted to matters of inquiry, research, professional self-reflection, professional self-development and critical interpretation. Throughout the course, students a) study current research in the field of language teaching and learning, b) study research methods and procedures, c) develop skills in reading and critically evaluating published research articles, d) develop skills in reporting on research studies, e) engage in practice teaching and/or classroom observations, and f) practice classroom-based and/or school-based action research techniques during which they develop skills to become reflective practitioners.

In the process of developing the above skills and participating in the above activities, students are likely to be involved in any one of the acquisition of the six areas of knowledge involved in the preparation of disciplined-based, reflective teachers for a pluralistic society: 1) knowledge of curriculum, 2) knowledge of learners, 3) knowledge of subject matter, 4) knowledge of educational goals and assessment, 5) knowledge of social context, and 6) knowledge of pedagogy. We will explore the thinking that lies behind Second Language Education research, and we will explore the methods of data collection and analysis that are appropriate for each

method. Students will develop the conceptual tools to think about and plan for an independent small-scale investigative research project, and will be introduced to the range of practical techniques to carryout, analyze and report on, independent research in their own classrooms.

**Course Requirements:**

You are expected to be prepared and professional. Please make every effort to be on time and stay until the end of class. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observances in advance. Assignments are due on the date indicated in the syllabus. Late submissions will result in a half-grade drop per day late, unless arrangements are made with the instructor. All assignments including Literature Review should be typed with Times New Roman, 12 pt and double-space.

Grades of A-D are awarded based on the following criteria:

- Attendance at all class sessions
- Participation in discussions and exercises on issues raised in class
- Completion of assignments on various topics
- Completion of a topic presentation
- Completion of a demonstration
- Successful completion of a final exam

**Required Textbooks:**

Mackey, Alison & Gass, Susan M. (2005). *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. ISBN#0-8058-4249-7

Mitchell, Rosamond & Myles, Florence. (2004). *Second Language Learning Theories* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). New Jersey: Oxford University Press. ISBN# 0340807660.

**Other resources:**

EDCI 730 homepage: Log on <http://www.courses.umd.edu/> and you'll see it.

(Search your directory ID through: <https://www.directory.umd.edu/cgi-bin/search>. Type in your name and you'll find your directory ID. Or search through <https://www.directory.umd.edu/cgi-bin/chpwd?searchbyumid> and type in your SSN and Testudo PIN, you'll get your directory ID. If you don't know your PIN or still have questions, please call 301-405-1500)

University of Maryland at College Park TESOL website:

<http://www.lib.umd.edu/MCK/tesol.html>

Second language education program, EDCI, University of Maryland at College Park website:

<http://www.education.umd.edu/EDCI/SecondLangEd/>

### **Disability services**

If you have a documented disability that requires course accommodations, please see me as soon as possible. You must have this information on record with the University. If needed, contact Disability Support Services.

### **University of Maryland Honor Pledge**

The University has an approved Code of Academic Integrity available on the web at [www.inform.umd.edu/Campusinfo/Departments/jpo/code\\_acinteg.html](http://www.inform.umd.edu/Campusinfo/Departments/jpo/code_acinteg.html)

It is expected that students are familiar with this code and agree to abide by applicable policies. *"I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination."*

### **Class Wrap-up:**

One (sometimes two) student is asked to wrap up what the class lectures, presentations, discussions are about. Please list main points (main concepts, main ideas) in bullets and post them on Discussion of our WebCT. This wrap-up also serves as a review list for your final exam.

### **Presentation:**

The purpose of this task is to make us familiar with current studies in Second language learning. You are required to search for **two research articles: one qualitative and one quantitative**. The role of the presenter is to summarize the information gathered from the article.

On the day of the presentation, presenters should provide a **1-page handout** for members of the class to follow as they present their summary and findings of the article. Also, presenters should provide **a copy of the article for the instructor**.

The handouts need to include **purpose, problem, research design, results and classroom implications**.

Before the presentation, your **Powerpoint slides** must be sent to the instructor. The instructor will upload the handouts to our course WebCT.

#### **Time limit for Topic presentation: 20 minutes.**

Rubric for presentation (15 points for each presentation)

- Presents a thorough review of the article (5 points)
- Describes implications for classroom application (2.5 points)
- Shows thorough preparation, including effective visual aids and handouts (5 points)
- Uses time effectively and remains within time limit (2.5 points)

### **Research Analysis**

You are required to submit a quantitative research article analysis report on a chosen quantitative research and a qualitative research article analysis report on a chosen qualitative research (Don't use the same articles you have used for presentation). Please make sure you answer all questions here according to the type of your chosen research:

Rubric for research article analysis report (5 points each article)

- Answer all questions
- Three questions for 1 point.

### **Quantitative research article analysis report**

#### **Answer all following questions**

1. Provide full citation (APA style)
2. What kind of study is this?
3. In what context was the research conducted?
4. What is the general purpose of the study? What questions does it raise?
5. How does answering the research question(s) add something new to what is already known?  
If the study is a replication, why is that important?
6. Who or what was studied? (number and key characteristics)
7. In sequential order, what were the major steps in performing the study?
8. What data were recorded and used for analysis? (e.g. questionnaire responses, test scores, field notes, etc.)
9. What kind(s) of data analysis were used? (e.g. statistical, logical categorization, etc.)
10. What were the results? (After analysis, what do the data from item 8 say about the question(s) raised in item 4?)
11. What does the author conclude? (In light of both item 10 and the entire study experience, what is said about item 4?)
12. What cautions does the author raise about interpreting the study, and what do you think are important reservations?
13. What particularly interesting or valuable things did you learn from reading the report? (Consider results, method, discussion, references, etc.)
14. What are the limitations of this study?
15. What are the implications for teaching/learning?

### **Qualitative research article analysis report**

#### **Answer all following questions**

1. Provide a full citation (APA style).
2. Who is the investigator? Include personal history, particularly as related to the purpose, participants, or site of the study.
3. What type of qualitative research is this (i.e. case study, ethnographic, diary study)?
4. What is the purpose of the study? What are the focusing questions (if any)? Is the purpose primarily theoretical, practical, or personal?
5. What is the theoretical framework (if described by the author)?
6. Where does the study take place, and who are the participants? Describe the general physical and social context of the setting and salient characteristics of the main participants. If this is not a field study, describe the setting and participants presented in the secondary data source.
7. In what sequence did the major elements of the study occur? Describe (or diagram) timing, frequency, order, and relationships used in organizing the study.
8. How were data collected? Was recording done through observation and field notes, taped interviews with transcription, document analysis with record forms, or some combination?

9. If this was a field study, what was the author's role while collecting data?
10. What procedures were used for analysis of data? Was consistent comparison used, were categories developed inductively, were themes constructed, was computer software employed?
11. What were the results?
12. How are the design or research methods used to enhance the credibility of the study?
13. What parts of the study did you find powerful or particularly instructive? What was moving or striking, and what provided new insight?
14. What are the limitations of the study?
15. What are the possible implications for teaching and learning?

**Rubric for Research proposal (10 points):**

Your research proposal should include all following:

**Title (1 points):**

It should be concise and descriptive. Often titles are stated in terms of a functional relationship, because such titles clearly indicate the independent and dependent variables. However, if possible, think of an informative but catchy title.

**Abstract (2 points):**

It is a brief summary of approximately 200 words. It should include the research question, the rationale for the study, the hypothesis (if any), and the method. Descriptions of the method may include the design, procedures, the sample and any instruments that will be used.

**Introduction (3 points):**

The introduction typically begins with a general statement of the problem area, with a focus on a specific research problem, to be followed by the rationale or justification for the proposed study. The introduction generally covers the following elements:

1. State the research problem, which is often referred to as the purpose of the study.
2. Provide the context and set the stage for your research question in such a way as to show its necessity and importance.
3. Present the rationale of your proposed study and clearly indicate why it is worth doing.
4. State your hypothesis or theory, if any.
5. Set the delimitation or boundaries of your proposed research in order to provide a clear focus.
6. Provide definitions of key concepts.

**Methods (4 points):**

For quantitative studies, the method section typically consists of the following sections:

1. Design -What kind of design do you choose?

2. Participants - Who will take part in your study ? What kind of sampling procedure do you use?
3. Instruments - What kind of measuring instruments or questionnaires do you use? Why do you choose them? Are they valid and reliable?
4. Procedure - How do you plan to carry out your study? What activities are involved? How long does it take?

### **Rubric for Literature Review**

Rubric (15 points in total)

- An introduction to the topic you choose (3 points)
- Articles chosen relate directly to chosen topic (3 points)
- Complete citation in correct APA format in references (3 points)
- Clearly and concisely summarizes key points of all articles (3 points)
- Provides specific implications for classroom application (3 points)

### **Grading:**

1.	Attendance	5%
2.	Class wrap-up	5%
3.	Qualitative research article presentation	15%
4.	Qualitative research article analysis	5%
5.	Quantitative research article presentation	15%
6.	Quantitative research article analysis	5%
7.	Research proposal	10%
8.	Literature review	15%
9.	Making final exam	5%
10.	Final exam	20%

### **Schedule of Topics**

#### **Class 1: Jan. 25, 2006**

Overview of the course  
Self introduction  
Introduction to WebCT  
Presentation dates selection

#### **Class 2: Feb. 1, 2006**

Assigned reading and study: *Second Language Learning Theories*: Chapter 3  
Lecture: The Universal Grammar Approach part I  
Discussion groups: The class is going to be divided into 3 groups. Each group searches for a research article in second language learning and lead a discussion.

**Class 3: Feb. 8, 2006**

Assigned reading and study: *Second Language Learning Theories*: Chapter 3

Lecture: The Universal Grammar Approach part II

Discussion groups: The class is going to be divided into 3 groups. Each group searches for a research article in second language learning and lead a discussion.

**Class 4: Feb. 15, 2006**

**Qualitative research article analysis report due:** see rubric.

Assigned reading and study: *Second Language Learning Theories*: Chapter 5

Lecture: Chapter 5

Presentations

**Class 5: Feb. 22, 2006**

Assigned reading & study: *Second Language Learning Theories*: Chapter 8

Lecture: Chapter 8 part I

Presentations

**Class 6: March 1, 2006**

Assigned reading & study: *Second Language Learning Theories*: Chapter 8

Lecture: Chapter 8 part II

Presentations

**Class 7: March 8, 2006**

**Quantitative research article analysis report due:** see rubric.

Assigned reading & study: *Second Language Research*: Chapter 1

Lecture: Chapter 1

Presentations

**Class 8: March 15, 2006**

Assigned reading & study: *Second Language Research*: Chapter 2

Lecture: Chapter 2

Presentations

**Class 9: March 22, 2006**

Assigned reading & study: *Second Language Research*: Chapter 3

Lecture: Chapter 3

Presentations

**Class 10: March 29, 2006**

Assigned reading & study: *Second Language Research*: Chapter 4  
Lecture: Chapter 4  
Presentations

**Class 11: April 5, 2006**

Assigned reading & study: *Second Language Research*: Chapter 5  
Lecture: Chapter 5  
Presentations

**April 12, 2006 Montgomery county public schools Spring break ---No class**

**Class 12: April 19:**

**Research proposal due:** see Rubric.

Assigned reading & study: *Second Language Research*: Chapter 6  
Lecture: Chapter 6  
Presentations

**Class 13: April 26, 2006**

**Final exam 10 problems due by email attachment:** You will make your own final exam! You are required to make 10 problems on the chapter assigned (assign one week before the due date). Only multiple choices (A, B, C and D, no more, no less) for all problems are accepted. Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt, single space.

Assigned reading & study: *Second Language Research*: Chapter 7  
Lecture: Chapter 7

**Class 14: May 3, 2006**

Assigned reading & study: *Second Language Research*: Chapter 8

Lecture: Chapter 8

Presentations

**Class 15: May 10, 2006**

**Literature Review due:** The purpose of this assignment is to explore a topic of interest relevant to the second language learning.

- Select a particular population of second language learners: elementary school students, middle school students, high school students or college students.
- Review 10 or more research-based articles or book chapters, published in the last 10 years.
- Prepare an integrated summary of what the research seems to indicate
- Critically evaluate the research and discuss the implications for second language learning

- Suggest direction for further research
- Your work should be **at least 10 pages** in length and should conform to APA guidelines.

**Final Exam: Theory and Research**