Language and Literacy Development  
Spring 2013 EDHD840  
Syllabus

Professor: Meredith Rowe: mrowe@umd.edu  
Class Meeting: TUES 10:00-12:45 – EDU 1108 – Office hours by appointment  
Office phone: x53604  
Email: mrowe@umd.edu

This course has two main goals:

1. To provide familiarity with the theory and facts of child language and emergent literacy/beginning reading, and to provide the opportunity to discuss the major questions and issues that have stimulated research into language and literacy development.

2. To provide familiarity with the methods used in conducting child language research, in particular with the Child Language Data Exchange System (CHILDES), a computerized system for transcript production and analysis.

The first goal will be met through, readings, course discussions and the midterm and final project. The second goal will be met through tutorials in the CHILDES system and by using the system for the homework assignments (and possibly final project).

Requirements for the course include:

- Completing assigned readings, class participation, class presentations (30%)
- Completing 3 homework assignments (10%)
- Midterm take home essay (30%)
- Final project (30%)

Class Participation/Presentations:
This is a discussion-based class, thus the more prepared you are to discuss the readings and issues at hand the more everyone will get out of the class. To aid in this process each week please bring 2 typed discussion questions based on that week’s readings to class. You will raise these questions during discussion and hand them in at the end of each class. Further, students will be asked to lead occasional discussions on readings.

Assignments:
CHILDES Assignment 1: Transcription - Due September 24th  
CHILDES Assignment 2: Lexicon – Due October 1st  
CHILDES Assignment 3: MLU - Due October 8th  
Midterm: Handed out October 15th - Due October 22nd (2 take-home essays – 8 pages)
1 Paragraph summary of final project topic: Due November 5th  
Final Presentations: December 3rd and 10th  
Final Project Paper: Due December 17th by Noon

Final Project –a proposal for an empirical research study on language/literacy development  
Approximately 12 double spaced pages
CLASS POLICIES

Academic integrity: The University of Maryland, College Park has a student-administered Honor Code and Honor Pledge. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit http://www.studenthonor council.umd.edu/whatis.html. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. The code prohibits students from cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. Instances of this include submitting someone else’s work as your own, submitting your own work completed for another class without permission, or failing to properly cite information other than your own (found in journals, books, online, or otherwise). Any form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and any sign of academic dishonesty will be reported to the appropriate University officials.

Special needs: If you have a registered disability that will require accommodation, please see the instructor so necessary arrangements can be made. If you have a disability and have not yet registered with the University, please contact Disability Support Services in the Shoemaker Building (301.314.7682, or 301.405.7683 TTD) as soon as possible.

Religious observances: The University of Maryland policy on religious observances states that students not be penalized in any way for participation in religious observances. Students shall be allowed, whenever possible, to make up academic assignments that are missed due to such absences. However, the must contact the instructor before the absence with a written notification of the projected absence, and arrangements will be made for make-up work or examinations.

Course evaluations: As a member of our academic community, students have a number of important responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to submit course evaluations each term though CourseEvalUM in order to help faculty and administrators improve teaching and learning at Maryland. All information submitted to CourseEvalUM is confidential. Campus will notify you when CourseEvalUM is open for you to complete your evaluations for fall semester courses. Please go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete your evaluations. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

Missed single class due to illness: Once during a semester, a student’s self-authored note will be accepted as an excuse for missing a minor scheduled grading event in a single class session if the note documents the date of the illness, acknowledgement from the student that information provided in the note is correct, and a statement that the student understands that providing false information is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Students are expected to attempt to inform the instructor of the illness prior to the date of the missed class.*

Major scheduled grading events: The conditions for accepting a self-signed note do not apply to these events. Written, signed documentation by a health care professional, or other professional in the case of non-medical reasons (see below) of a University-approved excuse for the student’s absence must be supplied. This documentation must include verification of
treatment dates and the time period for which the student was unable to meet course 
requirements. Providers should not include diagnostic information. Without this documentation, 
opportunities to make up missed assignments or assessments will not be provided.

**Non-consecutive, medically necessitated absences from multiple class sessions:** Students who 
throughout the semester miss multiple, non-consecutive class sessions due to medical problems 
must provide written documentation from a health care professional that their attendance on 
those days was prohibited for medical reasons.

**Non-medical excused absences:** According to University policy, non-medical excused absences 
for missed assignments or assessments may include illness of a dependent, religious observance, 
involvement in University activities at the request of University officials, or circumstances that 
are beyond the control of the student. Students asking for excused absence for any of those 
reasons must also supply appropriate written documentation of the cause and make every attempt 
to inform the instructor prior to the date of the missed class.

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**Week 1: Course Overview / History & Theoretical Approaches to Language Development**

**Class meeting: September 3rd**


Instinct’]. *Cognitive Development*, 10, 131-156.

**Week 2: Biological Bases of Language**

**Class meeting: September 10th**

92, 1-12.

Huttenlocher, P.J. (2002). Plasticity in the development of language. Chapter 6 in: Neural 
Plasticity: The effects of environment on the development of the cerebral cortex. 

Stromswold, K. (2001). The heritability of language: A review and metaanalysis of twin, 


**Week 3: Emergence of Communicative Capacities: Gesture, Joint attention, Pragmatics.**

**Class meeting: September 17th**

*Merrill Palmer Quarterly*, 21, 205-226.

57(6), 1454-1463.

Rowe, M. L., & Goldin-Meadow, S. (2009). Differences in early gesture explain SES disparities 

Development*, 78, 705-722

**Week 4: The auditory, articulatory, phonological aspects of language**

**Class meeting: September 24th**


**Week 5: Building a Vocabulary**

**Class meeting: October 1st**


**Week 6: Morphology & Syntax**

**Class meeting: October 8th**


**Week 7: Individual Differences: The Learner**

**Class meeting: October 15th**


**Week 8: Individual Differences: The Environment**

Class meeting: October 22nd


**Week 9: Language, Culture and Cognition**

Class meeting: October 29th


Waxman et al (2013) Are nouns learned before verbs? Infants provide insight into a long-standing debate. *Child Development Perspectives*


**Week 10: Bilingualism & Second Language Acquisition**

Class meeting: November 5th


**Week 11: Narrative, Discourse and Academic Language**
Class meeting: November 12th


Snow, 2010 Academic language and the challenge of reading for learning about science. Science, 23

Week 12: The Foundations of Literacy
Class meeting: November 19th
Snow, C., Burns, S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.) *Preventing reading difficulties in young children.* Chapter 2 (pp 41-83).


Week 13: Individual Differences in Learning to Read: Learner and Environment
Class meeting: November 19th


Snow, C., Burns, S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.) *Preventing reading difficulties in young children.* Chapters 3-4 (pp 87-133).


Weeks 14 & 15:
Class meetings: December 3rd & 10th
No readings – class presentations

Final papers due: December 17th by Noon
## Course Overview – Topics and Deadlines

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