

**EDSL 571 Language Acquisition and Grammar
Eastern Mennonite University
Master of Arts in Education
Summer 2012**

Graduate Credit Hours: 3 semester hours

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Class Schedule: Online, June 11- August 11, 2012

Course Description:

Explores current topics and issues in the study of language acquisition, language development and grammar. Offers teachers practical ideas for teaching grammar in the context of today's classroom. Explores first and second language acquisition, multiple second language teaching strategies, and support services to assist English Language Learners (ELLs) in language and content learning. Includes study of grammars and linguistic awareness including, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics of the English language. Promotes parental involvement in language acquisition and academic success.

Course Rationale:

Our society is dependent upon a literate citizenry. As teachers we are expected to provide leadership by ensuring that all students reach their full potential as communicators. A study of language acquisition and grammar including phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics facilitates our verbal and written interactions with each other and informs our approach to classroom instruction.

This course serves the needs of both mainstream and specialized teachers who teach English Language Learners (ELLs). The professional organization Teachers of English to Speakers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) maintains that English as a Second Language (ESL) and Foreign Language (FL) teaching is one that must be studied in its own right. When approaches are analyzed, various methods are compared and contrasted, and numerous strategies for teaching specific language skills are identified student learning is advanced (Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning, 2006). Student learning is enhanced when the mainstream teacher practitioner and ESL specialist have specialized knowledge in language acquisition and grammar.

Instructional Strategies

A wide range of instructional strategies including a wide variety of readings, weekly on-line discussions, self-assessments, viewing of video clips and relevant websites, individual research of relevant topics of interest, practice of and reflection on instructional strategies, and lectures are used to achieve course outcomes.

Conceptual Framework: “Preparing Caring, Reflective Teachers for the Changing World”. The EMU Teacher Education Program endorses the theme “*Preparing Caring, Reflective Teachers for a Changing World*” as the conceptual framework from which its beliefs and outcomes are based. The Teacher Education Program envisions preparing informed lifelong leaders and learners who value the dignity of all persons and are ready and willing to share a pilgrimage of openness and continuous growth as they invite others to join them. These caring, reflective educators will offer healing and hope in a diverse world. Six performance outcomes focus all course and candidate outcomes.

M.A. in Education Program Outcomes:

Scholarship: to acquire advanced knowledge through core curriculum and specialty area courses and to organize and integrate that knowledge into professional practice.

Inquiry: to generate questions and to use critical thinking to self-assess, to view problems from multiple perspectives, to make informed decisions and to engage in action research for educational change.

Professional Knowledge: to acquire advanced pedagogical and specialty area knowledge in order to create cultures of change and manage environments conducive to learning, setting high expectations and implementing appropriate instructional and assessment practices.

Communication: to develop communication strategies (verbal, nonverbal, and technological) which support collaboration and resourcefulness to empower self and others.

Caring: to develop a nurturing spirit that advocates for students, encourages social and ethical responsibility, and promotes peace building in diverse settings.

Leadership: to act as social change agents by working collaboratively to bring about fair and just systemic change within educational contexts.

Course Outcomes: Those who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. examine the knowledge base of structural linguistics, transformational grammar, and discourse analysis to arrive at a more insightful description of English. (Scholarship, Inquiry)
2. demonstrate knowledge of English linguistics including phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics and apply those principles to instruction. (Professional Knowledge)
3. articulate the process of first and second language acquisition. (Scholarship)
4. plan lessons for ELLs to communicate using verbal and non-verbal language. (Professional Knowledge)

5. use multiple second language teaching strategies to assist ELLs in the different stages of acquisition. (Professional Knowledge)
6. articulate the conventions of the English language in social situations. (Scholarship)
7. plan for individual needs of ELL students by determining pupils' educational backgrounds and prior knowledge to guide instruction. (Professional Knowledge)
8. demonstrate an ability to plan meaningful lessons for ELL students by integrating listening, viewing, reading, speaking and writing skills. (Professional Knowledge)
9. use a variety of materials, texts, ideas, perspectives, and approaches including technologies in ESL/content instruction. (Professional Knowledge)
10. identify school support services to assist ELLs in language acquisition/content learning. (Communication, Caring, Leadership)
11. support collaboration and understanding between ELLs and their families with ESL teachers and other school staff. (Communication, Caring, Leadership)

Required Texts:

Folse, K.S. (2011). *Key to teaching grammar to English language learners: A practical handbook* (2nd ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Lightbown, P.M. & Spada, N. (2006). *How languages are learned* (3rd ed.). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Other readings as provided by the instructor through Moodle.

Supplemental Resource:

Herrell, A. and Jordan, M. (2011). *50 Strategies for teaching English language learners*. Columbus, Ohio: Pearson.

Course Requirements:

1. **Weekly Activities (200 points)**

- Readings, Reflections, and Discussions (120 points -15 points per week for 8 weeks)
Students are expected to do the assigned readings or viewings, complete a weekly reflection, and participate in the online class discussions. These readings, reflection assignment, and topics of discussions will be posted weekly on Moodle.
- Practical Activities: (80 Points -10 points per activity for 8 weeks)
Students are expected to complete a practical assignment each week related to the one of the course outcomes. These assignments are those that require students to apply the content in a classroom (or equivalent) setting. Students will be provided guidelines and a rubric for each assignment.

2. **End -of-Course Assessment (30 points)**

The end-of-course assessment will include short-answer questions that will give you the opportunity to reflect on and synthesize your learning from the course.

3. **Self-Selected Activities (120 points, 30 per option)**

Please complete **four** of the following activity options: (These assignments may be submitted any time between **July 9 and August 24**.)

Option 1: Explore Grammar Points. Pick **two** of the 15 Keys presented in the Folse text to explore more deeply. For each key selected, begin with the five examples of typical ELL errors (Part A of each Key). For each of the five examples, provide: **a)** an analysis of the student's error, **b)** the explanation that you might provide to students to help them learn the grammar convention, and **c)** 2-3 examples of correct use of the grammar convention. The explanations and the examples you provide should be appropriate for students at the grade level you teach (or plan to teach). The Folse text contains the content you would need to complete this assignment, but you may choose to consult other sources as well. [Outcomes 2, 4]

Option 2: Identify and annotate websites on language acquisition and grammar. Identify 10 websites that relate to topics identified in your textbooks and/or class content. These websites are those that are designed to *support teachers*. Provide a brief write-up about each site. The write-up should include the following: **a)** name and address of the website, **b)** brief description of the site and its purpose, and **c)** advantages and disadvantages of the site. [Course outcomes 1-11]

Option 3: Identify and annotate websites that may support students in language acquisition and grammar. Identify 10 websites that you might incorporate in lessons to have students enhance language learning or to have students practice taught skills. These websites are those that are designed to *support students*. Provide a brief write-up about each site. The write-up should include the following: **a)** name and address of the website, **b)** brief description of the site and its purpose, including what skills the site targets, and **c)** how you used it or might use it with students. [Course outcomes 4-9]

Option 4: Review ELL strategies. Select 10 strategies from the optional text *50 Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners* by Herrell and Jordan (2011). Provide the name of the strategy and an explanation about how you might use each strategy within the framework of your teaching or educational setting. Most of these strategies can work for non-ELL students as well. [Course Outcomes 4-9]

Option 5: Read and respond to two scholarly articles. Select and read two articles from a reputable journal source such as *The Reading Teacher*, *Middle School Journal*, *English Journal*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *Educational Leadership*, *Modern Language Journal*, *Language and Education*, *Child Development*, *Applied Linguistics*, *TESOL Journal* or *TESOL Quarterly* (this is not an exhaustive list however). Each article is to have a focus on one or more of the 11 course outcomes as identified in the *Course Outcomes* section of the syllabus. Use the “What, So What, Now What” protocol posted on Moodle to reflect on the journal articles. [Outcomes 1-11]

Option 6: Interview an English Language Learner. Interview an adult or an older child/student who entered school as a non-English speaker. Craft your questions carefully. Ask the person to recall those things that were most helpful and least helpful both in and out of the English-speaking school. In what ways, if any, was the person able to make use of the home language? What would the person do differently if he or she were a teacher of non-English speaking students? Explore the area of school and home involvement. Your interview can be written in a question and answer format or as a feature article. A length of 3-4 pages is recommended including at least 1 page devoted to an analysis of the interview. [Course outcomes 5-11]

Option 7: Investigate conventions of the English language in social situations. An English language learner may be able to choose the right words and use long, complex sentences with correct grammar, but still may have a communication problem if he or she has not mastered the rules for social language known as *pragmatics*. Several links related to the teaching of pragmatics are provided for you on blackboard in a folder entitled “Option 7”. Write a short 2-3 page paper synthesizing what you have learned. In this paper, briefly describe what this field might include, why it might be taught, and the implications for teachers assisting students with ELL (or general learners) with such conventions. You may also want to find additional research to support your paper. Please include a references section with your paper. [Course outcome 6]

Option 8: Connect home and school. Complete *A and B* below.

A. Identify ten best practices that teachers can use to effectively communicate with ELL parents. Present these practices in a visually appealing handout or brochure format. *Regular classroom teachers or ELL teachers* are the target audience for this product. Be sure to provide resources/references for each idea. [Course outcomes 10-11]

B. Identify five school-wide programs or practices that may strengthen partnerships between the school and families of ELLs. Provide a brief description of each practice and a rationale implementing it in your school. Be sure to provide resources/references for each idea. [Course outcomes 10-11]

Option 9: Plan an English language arts lesson. Plan a lesson to be taught in a Language Arts block, and English class, or an ESL class. In this lesson, integrate listening, viewing, reading, speaking and writing skills into the lesson appropriate to your educational setting. Your lesson plan must account for individual needs of ELL students by determining pupils' educational backgrounds and prior knowledge to guide instruction. Complete the *Lesson Design Conversation Map* sheet (see Moodle Course Documents Section) to share your thinking in designing this lesson. [Course outcomes 7-9]

Option 10: Plan a grammar lesson based on Folse's *Keys to ELL Grammar*. Plan a lesson around one of the 15 keys of ELL Grammar from Folse text with an age group of your choice. Submit a copy of the lesson plan and copies of or reference to any instructional materials you use. Complete the *Lesson Design Conversation Map* sheet (see Moodle Course Documents Section) to share your thinking in designing this lesson. [Course outcomes 4, 5, 8, 9]

Option 11: Plan a content-based lesson. Embed language learning in to a content-based lesson (the two-for-one approach). You have full autonomy as to topic/subject area. Please use the SIOP lesson format that can be found in the course documents section of Moodle. Submit a copy of the lesson plan using the SIOP lesson format that can be found in the course documents section of Moodle and copies of or reference to any instructional materials you use. Complete the *Lesson Design Conversation Map* sheet (see Moodle Course Documents Section) to share your thinking in designing this lesson. [Course outcomes 7-9]

Option 12: Plan a literature-based lesson. Plan a lesson based on a children's book, adolescent literature, or non-fiction article. Your lesson plan must account for individual needs of ELL students by determining pupils' educational backgrounds and prior knowledge to guide instruction. Integrate listening, viewing, reading, speaking and writing skills into the lesson appropriate to your educational setting. Submit a copy of the lesson plan and copies of or reference to any instructional materials you use. Complete the *Lesson Design Conversation Map* sheet (see Moodle Course Documents Section) to share your thinking in designing this lesson. [Course outcomes 7-9]

Option 13: Propose your own activity (must be approved by the instructor).

Review the list of course outcomes listed in this syllabus. Propose an activity that would extend your learning in one or more of these course outcomes. The activity you proposed should be at a level of rigor commensurate with other options provided by the instructor. To have your proposal approved as one of the options, send the instructor an email by *July 16, 2012* describing the activity and the course outcomes that it addresses.

Evaluation:

Please note that simply fulfilling all of the requirements of the course does not automatically guarantee a final grade of A. **The instructor evaluates the quality and scope of all course work.** In addition, all assignments should be submitted on the specified due date. Assignments turned in late may be subject to letter grade reductions.

Grading Scale:

A	95-100	A-	91-95
B+	87-90	B	84-87
B-	80-83	C	79 and below

Requirements at a Glance:

Assignment	Point Value	Due Date
Weekly Readings, Reflections, and Discussions	120 (15 points per week for 8 weeks)	Weekly The due date for each week is Tuesday at 11:59 p.m.
Weekly Practical Activities	80 Points (10 points per activity for 8 weeks)	Weekly The due date for each week is Tuesday at 11:59 p.m.
Four Self-Selected Assignments	120 points (30 points each)	August 24, 2012 by 11:59 p.m.
End of Course Assessment	30 points	August 10, 2012 by 11:59 p.m.
Total	350 points	
Final Grade = earned points divided by possible points		

Academic Integrity: The responsibility to foster and guard academic integrity rests with all members of the academic community. A foundation of mutual trust is essential to the learning community. Any incidents of academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade for the work submitted and a "Record of Academic Dishonesty" filed in the graduate dean's office. Students are asked to meet with the professor (and other affected persons, where appropriate) to examine the effects of the dishonesty on others and to develop an accountability plan.

Special Accommodations Statement: If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability, or has emergency medical information to share, please inform the instructor of your needs.

Use of Graduate Level Writing Standards

Students are expected to follow the EMU Writing Standards Graduate Level rubric for all written assignments except when otherwise specified. (see Appendix A).

References:

- Calderon, M. (2007). *Teaching reading to English language learners, Grades 6-12: A framework for improving achievement in the content areas*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Dixon-Krauss, L. (1996). *Vygotsky in the classroom: Mediated literacy instruction and assessment*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Goodluck, H. (1991). *Language acquisition: A linguistic introduction*. Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Hill, J. & Flynn, K. (2006). *Classroom instruction that works with English language learners*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Johnson, D. (2001). *Vocabulary in the elementary and middle school*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Owens, R. (2008). *Language development*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Pence, K. & Justice, L. (2008). *Language development from theory to practice*. Upper Saddleback, NJ: Pearson.
- Rozmiarek, R. (2006). *Improving reading skills across the content areas: Ready-to-use activities and assessments for grades 6-12*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Weaver, C. (1996). *Teaching grammar in context*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Weaver, C. (Ed.). (1998). *Lessons to share: On teaching grammar in context*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Appendix A

Writing Standards – Graduate Level (Grid Version)

Criteria	A excellent	B good	C minimal expectations	Comments
Content <i>(quality of the information, ideas and supporting details.)</i>	- shows clarity of purpose - offers depth of content - applies insight and represents original thinking	- shows clarity of purpose - offers substantial information and sufficient support - represents some original thinking	- shows clarity of purpose - lacks depth of content and may depend on generalities or the commonplace - represents little original thinking	
Structure <i>(logical order or sequence of the writing)</i>	- is coherent and logically developed - uses very effective transitions	- is coherent and logically developed - uses smooth transitions	- is coherent and logically (but not fully) developed - has some awkward transitions	
Rhetoric and Style <i>(appropriate attention to audience)</i>	- is concise, eloquent and rhetorically effective - uses varied sentence structure - is engaging throughout and enjoyable to read	- displays concern for careful expression - uses some variation in sentence structure - may be wordy in places	- displays some originality <u>but</u> lacks imagination and may be stilted - uses little varied sentence structure - frequently uses jargon and clichés - uses generally clear but frequently wordy prose	
Information Literacy <i>(locating, evaluating, and using effectively the needed information as appropriate to assignment)</i>	- uses high-quality and reliable sources - chooses sources from many types of resources - chooses timely resources for the topic - integrates references and quotations to support ideas fully	- uses mostly high-quality and reliable sources - chooses sources from a moderate variety of types of resources - chooses resources with mostly appropriate dates - integrates references and quotations to provide some support for ideas	- uses a few poor-quality or unreliable sources - chooses sources from a few types of resources - chooses a few resources with inappropriate dates - integrates references or quotations that are loosely linked to the ideas of the paper	
Source Integrity <i>(appropriate acknowledgment of sources used in research)</i>	- cites sources for all quotations - cites credible paraphrases correctly - includes reference page - makes virtually no errors in documentation style	- cites sources for all quotations - usually cites credible paraphrases correctly - includes reference page - makes minimal errors in documentation style	- has sources for all quotations - has mostly credible paraphrases, sometimes cited correctly - includes reference page with several errors - makes several errors in documentation style.	
Conventions <i>(adherence to grammar rules: usage, mechanics)</i>	- uses well-constructed sentences - makes virtually no errors in grammar and spelling - makes accurate word choices	- almost always uses well-constructed sentences - makes minimal errors in grammar and spelling - makes accurate word choices	- usually uses well-constructed sentences - makes several errors - makes word choices that distract the reader	
The weighting of each of the six areas is dependent on the specific written assignment and the teacher's preference. Plagiarism occurs when one presents as one's own "someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source" (adapted from Council of Writing Program Administrators).				Grade