H-810W Language Minority Learners I: Models of Bilingual Education & Literacy Instruction
Course Syllabus
Spring 2007

Meetings: Mondays 8.00-10.00 a.m.
Classroom: Longfellow 319
Professor: Catherine Snow
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Office Hours: by appointment
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Literacy is the key gatekeeper to success in educational settings and beyond. Literacy encompasses many skills: most centrally constructing meaning with and communicating meaning through text, but also the language skills that are critical to understanding and producing text. In an increasingly knowledge-based economy, highly developed literacy skills are crucial for student success. The literacy development of second language (L2) learners and of language minorities is inextricably linked to a global context. Immigration trends produce classrooms with high numbers of students who speak languages other than that of daily classroom instruction, not just in the U.S. but in western Europe, Australia, and Canada. Furthermore, students in post-colonial countries are almost all attending school in a language they do not speak at home. Teachers and literacy specialists in all these various settings must be equipped to provide quality literacy experiences that take into account the linguistic and cultural origins of their students; in many of these settings teachers must simultaneously provide challenging instructional experiences for their monolingual students.

This course is designed to provide an overview of the major issues affecting the literacy development of L2 learners. We start by providing a quick introduction to the U.S. policy context governing these children’s educational experiences, but also draw on information from other educational settings to inform the discussion. We then move on to review the research on different models for organizing the education of L2 learners. Then we focus for three weeks on specific pedagogical and learning challenges: initial reading instruction, vocabulary and oral language, and writing. Finally, we turn to the vexing issue of the intersection and/or differentiation between special needs and language proficiency. Students will finish the course with a strong sense of the similarities and differences between bilingual and monolingual populations, and how understanding these differences, at both group and individual levels, serves as the foundation for creating instructional experiences that benefit all learners in a classroom.

Communication: The course website will have all relevant course information and will be updated regularly with any additional information or announcements. Email will be the primary method of communication outside of the seminar.

Coursepacks: Coursepacks are centrally distributed during the first week of classes from the Gutman Conference Center and during the second week of classes at the Library Circulation Desk. Coursepacks are automatically term billed. For further information please consult the Course Materials link located in the General Course Information topic box on MyGSE.
Course Requirements

Class Participation (10%): Students are expected to participate in class, which is most possible when readings have been done in advance.

Response Papers (3X15%): The day before class meetings in weeks 2, 4, and 6, participants will submit a brief response paper (500 word limit, APA format) based on a question or two about the assigned readings. The papers are designed to promote preparation for class and critical thinking about the material, as well as to help shape the focus of the following class discussion.

Reading Report (10%): Every participant (alone or with a partner) will have the opportunity to select a reading from the supplementary list or from elsewhere (if approved) that s/he considers important for the rest of the class to know about. The reporter will write up a brief summary of the key findings/insights from the paper for the benefit of the entire class, and might be asked to report orally on it.

Final Take-home (35%): A brief final assignment will be given, designed to offer the opportunity to synthesize the material from across the weeks of the module. The final take-home should be 4-5 pages long. **It will be due March 28th.**

Final Course Requirement: Submit an evaluation form for the course in order to fulfill the general requirements of the course.

Academic Integrity
Academic work submitted for this seminar must be the work of the participant and any sources used in compiling must be accurately and thoroughly cited. The HGSE policy on plagiarism can be found at: 

http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/registrar/handbook/acad-integrity.shtml

Writing Assistance
If you are in need of help with your writing, or are unsure of proper methods for citations, please schedule an appointment with a Writing Services Teaching Fellow by visiting Gutman Library (G23A, ground floor) or sending an email to reference@gse.harvard.edu to schedule an appointment.

If you have any doubt or difficulty with specific aspects of your writing, it is wise to access the resources available. As well, feel free to approach Jeannette for help, and/or with any questions or concerns.

Late Paper Policy
There are no extensions for the response papers that are due prior to classes 2, 4, and 6. If an extension is needed for the final paper, please discuss this before the due date. If a new due date is established and the paper is not turned in by that date, there will be no credit given for the paper.

Licensure
H-810W Language Minority Learners I: Models of Bilingual Education & Literacy Instruction addresses the following competencies and standards as required by the Massachusetts Department of Education.

603 CMR 7.07: Reading Initial License- Subject Matter Knowledge (a-m)
603 CMR 7.08: Professional Standards for Teachers
(a) Plans Curriculum and Instruction
(b) Promotes Equity

Coursework and readings also address the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in English Language Arts.
Weekly Schedule of Topics and Readings

February 5, 2007

I. Policies influencing education for L2 learners in the U.S.


Crawford, J (2003). Hard sell: Why is bilingual education so unpopular with the American public? Available at http://www.language-policy.org/content/features/article8.htm

February 12, 2007

II. Pedagogical Models for Educating Language Minority Students


February 19, 2007

Presidents’ Day – No class.

February 26, 2007

III. Instructional Challenges and Effective Methods: Reading words and comprehending texts


*Available through citation linker.*

Proctor, August, Carlo, & Snow. (In press). The intriguing role of Spanish language vocabulary knowledge in predicting English reading comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology.*

*Available in Coursepack*

March 5, 2007

**IV. Instructional Challenges and Effective Methods: Teaching vocabulary and academic language**


*Available in Coursepack*


*Available in Coursepack*


*Available in Coursepack*


March 12, 2007

**V. Instructional Challenges and Effective Methods: Spelling, grammar, and writing**


*Available through citation linker.*


*Available through citation linker.*


*Available through citation linker.*
VI. The Bilingual/Special Needs Dilemma: Disability versus Exposure


Supplemental readings have been identified for several reasons:

- You are responsible to select one additional article for presentation to the rest of the class. The supplemental list is one source of such articles.
- Participants may have an interest in a particular topic, and thus may be interested in additional readings that address that topic.
- The condensed nature of the 6-week module severely limits the possibilities of assigning required reading. The supplementary reading list might be of value to you even if you don’t get to it this semester.

Policy- and program-related supplemental readings


**Pedagogy-related supplemental readings**


**Special needs and bilingualism-related supplemental readings**

