

Metadata

Title	CMSD4000
Description	Typical and Atypical Language Development
Author	Liang Chen, Ph.D.
Organisation	University of Georgia

General Information:

Instructor:

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Course material:

There will be no textbook for this course. The instructor has compiled the readings in web-based lecture format and has made them available to the students through Webct. There are 7 modules, and students are required to complete the lectures for each module online, as well as additional required readings from various other websites. Students are also required to view selected online video/audio programs.

Course description:

The field of language development is an incredibly exciting area of study for college and university students in diverse disciplines, including allied health (e.g., speech language pathology, audiology), liberal arts (e.g., linguistics, psychology), and education (e.g., elementary education, special education). For students in many professional training programs, a basic course in language development is required at the undergraduate or graduate level.

In this course on typical and atypical development, we explore language development from infancy to adulthood in monolingual and bilingual populations, as well as in typical and atypical populations. We will examine the steps, milestones, sequences, processes, and difficulties that one may go through in acquiring his or her native language (primarily English). We will also examine the ways in which exceptional conditions can interact with an individual's experience with and use of language. The influences of culture, gender, socioeconomic status, cognitive abilities, and pre-linguistic influences on language development will be considered.

Course objectives:

Box 1: CEC Professional Standard #6: Language

Special educators understand typical and atypical language development and the ways in which exceptional conditions can interact with an individual's experience with and use of language.

Special educators use individualized strategies to enhance language development and teach communication skills to individuals with exceptional learning needs. ... Special educators match their communication methods to an individual's language proficiency and cultural and linguistic differences. Special educators provide effective language models and they use communication strategies and resources to facilitate understanding of subject matter for individuals with exceptional learning needs whose primary language is not English.

This course is designed to help you meet the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Professional Standard #6: Language, as outlined in Box 1. Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. Acquire an appreciation for the amazing task that almost every child is able to accomplish in acquiring his or her first language.
2. Gain a detailed knowledge of language development including the major milestones in the development of: speech perception, speech production, word learning, morphology, syntax, pragmatic and social language skills.
3. Learn some of the methods used in studying language development and become acquainted with the types of results these methods have uncovered.
4. Explore basic child language data and conduct basic analyses of this data.
5. Become familiar with the major theories of language development and some of the major debates in field.
6. Relate normal language development to disorders and abnormalities.
7. Understand cultural and linguistic differences in language development, including those of children who are developing language in diverse cultures or developing language atypically (e.g., children with disabilities as well as the exceptional learning needs of individuals whose primary language is not English).
8. Appreciate the fact that "the study of language development is a constantly evolving and complex area of science in which practitioners have many more questions than answers" (Pence and Justice 2008: 3).
9. Appreciate the importance of language research to the everyday practices and activities of parents, teachers, psychologists, and other professionals who are invested in helping children achieve their fullest language development potential.

Course Communications:

In order for communications regarding this course to be documented, all assignments in this course must be submitted via the WebCT E-mail function in this course. The instructor reserves the right to require that some specific assignments to be sent in via U.S. Mail.

Module Topic /Dates For Completion

Students should pay close attention to due dates, as the modules do not necessarily correspond to particular weeks. All late assignments will incur a 5% penalty per day. Quizzes, if any, must be taken by midnight on the terminal date for each module.

Students are required to complete modules during the assigned time period for that module. Students are required to complete all work associated with a module by the terminal date for that

module.

Students may complete some individual work ahead of the scheduled time. The terminal dates for module completion are presented below, beside the title for each of the 7 modules. For any questions, E-mail your instructor or TA using the WebCT e-mail function.

Module 1 Introduction to language [January 17] [[print-friendly version](#)]

- We will define language and explain how language relates to areas of speech, hearing, and communication. We will also introduce features of languages that make it so remarkable. We describe the major structures of the brain, and discuss how brain damage can affect the comprehension and production of language.

Module 2 Acquiring the basic grammar [February 7] [[print friendly version](#)]

- We introduce the “building blocks” of language development: semantic, morphological, syntactic, and phonological development. We introduce major language development milestones that are achieved in each domain of language. We also introduce some methods that researchers and clinicians use to measure language development.

CEC Professional Standard

GC6K3 Typical language development and how that may differ for individuals with learning disabilities.

GC6S1 Enhance vocabulary development.

Module 3 communicative competence [February 21] [[print friendly version](#)]

- We examine the development of skills and abilities in the use language in communication (pragmatics).

CEC Professional Standard

CC6K2 Characteristics of one’s own culture and use of language and the ways in which these can differ from other cultures and uses of languages.

CC6K3 Ways of behaving and communicating among cultures that can lead to misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

Module 4 language and literacy [March 7] [[print friendly version](#)]

- We discuss the development of reading and writing and introduce some approaches to understanding and teaching literacy.

CEC Professional Standard

GC6K1 Impact of language development and listening comprehension on academic and nonacademic learning of individuals with disabilities.

GC6S4 Teach methods and strategies for producing legible documents.

GC6S2 Teach strategies for spelling accuracy and generalization.

Module 5 SLA in children [March 25] [[print friendly version](#)]

- Why do adults have more difficulty learning a new language than children do? In this module, we discuss similarities and differences between learning a first language and learning a second, and we consider some of the difficulties that children who are bilingual or learning a new language face in school.

CEC Professional Standard

CC6S2 Use communication strategies and resources to facilitate understanding of subject matter for students whose primary language is not the dominant language.

Module 6 Atypical language development [April 11] [[print friendly version](#)]

- This module defines the term language disorder and examines some common conditions that include language disorders. We will examine how language impairment affects people of all ages, from infancy to old age. We will examine how an individual with atypical language development may exhibit impaired comprehension and/or use of a spoken, written, and/or other symbol system and may involve (a) the form of language (phonology, morphology, and syntax), (b) the content of language (semantics), and/or (c) the function of language in communication (pragmatics) in any combination.

CEC Professional Standard

GC6K2 Communication and social interaction alternatives for individuals who are nonspeaking.

CC6S1 Use strategies to support and enhance communication skills of individuals with exceptional learning needs.

GC6S3 Teach individuals with disabilities to monitor for errors in oral and written language.

Module 7 Individual and cultural differences [April 28] [[print friendly version](#)]

- We examine some of the individual differences in language development, and detail the connection between language and culture. We explore factors that affect the language competencies of individual children. Questions that we address include but are not limited to (a) Does the language a child is learning (e.g., Chinese versus English) influence the rate of language development? (b) How do the ways in which parents interact with their child affect the time at which the child produces his or first word? (c) Do children who show early delays in language development typically catch up with their peers?

CEC Professional Standard

CC6K1 Effects of cultural and linguistic differences on growth and development.

Course Requirements:

The course consists of 7 Modules. Each module will take approximately 10 hours to complete. The modules include some of the following activities, and these activities should be done in the following order during each module.

Assigned Readings--nongraded:

One or more web-based reading lectures and video programs assigned in each module. Also, each student is required to read all materials which are posted to the class discussion board during various modules. Students are also required to read all important announcements in the course. Students should anticipate a minimum of five (5) hours of readings and study assignments per module. When video viewing is required in a module, students should allocate

between 30 minutes and 60 minutes of viewing time. [For a list of useful video clips or programs related to the course, click [here](#).]

Module Activities:

Specific activities are described in each module. These may involve article reviews, reflective thought questions, reports on web-sites, discussion board assignments, assessments, etc. One or two activities may be required during any particular module. Students should anticipate spending between 5 and 12 hours on module assignments in each module. All assignments (unless otherwise directed) are to be turned in electronically by the terminal date for module completion.

Review Questions:

Review questions in the form of multiple choice questions are required in each module throughout the course and must be completed by the terminal date of the corresponding module. Students are allowed and encouraged to use their text and other assigned course materials to complete the questions. These questions are nongraded.

Chatroom Discussions:

Chatrooms are scheduled as virtual office hours during several of the modules. These are not required assignments. These chats provide opportunity for students to work directly with their instructor and are generally scheduled prior to major assignments as a way for students to ask specific questions. Guidelines for participating in the chatrooms will be posted on the Important Announcements board and should be reviewed before entering a chat.

Discussion Board Discussions:

When a discussion board discussion is assigned for a particular module, each student will be expected to make two (2) entries in the discussion board; Students should not make more than two entries, since this will increase the reading assignment load for all students! A topic or series of questions will be assigned, and students should make a two paragraph response each time they make an entry. These responses should reference the assigned readings and or the text (cite specific readings and pages in the text), as well as your experiences. You will be required to make your first entry within 3 days of the beginning date of each module. More information on participation in the discussion boards will be provided in the various modules or during the course in the announcements section, which is found in the Discussions.

Reflections:

Students are expected to submit four short (one page with single space) reflections on the assigned readings or viewings for Module 2, Module 4, Module 5 and Module 6. These reflections are intended to help you express what you learned from the module or how you can see yourself applying this information in your classroom in the future. You can also use them to express a point of view that differs from that of the reading, or muse about those points the reading brought up that you'd like to have clarified or learn more about. These reflections will constitute 40% of your final grade. An example of reflections can be found [here](#) and assignment section of the course.

The Final Project:

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Students are expected to complete a final project consisting a set of questions which allow the students to demonstrate knowledge of course material and meet selected CEC standards involving language and language development. The final project constitutes 45% of your final grade. It is highly recommended that the student start thinking about the project from the first day of class. Click [here](#) now and save a copy in your computer with your own name as an identifier (e.g., Liang Chen CMSD4000 Final Project.doc).

Academic Honesty:

All academic work must meet the standards included in A Culture of Honesty. The Student Honor Code of the University of Georgia states “I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.” For more information, visit this website: <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>.

Special Accommodations:

If you need accommodations or have special needs for classroom success, please let me know within the first two weeks of classes and provide me with documentation of the type of accommodations you need so I can plan accordingly and make appropriate arrangements. For information on documentation requirements, contact the Learning Disability Center (706-542-0734) or Disabilities Services (706-542-8719).

Grading and Assessment:

Weight	Description	Points	Due
Participation and Professionalism = 5%	This portion of your grade will be determined by the instructor after evaluating your professional behavior (e.g., submitting assignments on time, responding to inquiries and requests in an appropriate and timely fashion, interacting with peers in an appropriate and supportive fashion, etc.) over the course of the semester.	5 points	
Reflections #1-4= 40%	Four short (one page single space) reflections on the assigned readings or viewings for each module.	40 points (4 reflections @ 10 points each)	
Discussion Boards = 10%	Questions will be posted – usually once per module – to generate discussion amongst members of the class and to allow you to demonstrate your mastery of the topics. You will be expected to make a substantive contribution to each discussion and respond to anyone's questions or responses to your posts. Substantive posts include all of the necessary	10 points (2 discussion boards @ 5 points each)	

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	information to answer the question(s) and novel examples that demonstrate the ability to apply the information to your experience. Your posts do not have to be lengthy but need to address the question(s). You are also expected to interact with your peers by commenting or questioning what they have written and the examples they provide for each discussion.		
Final Project = 45%	Students will demonstrate knowledge of course material and meet selected CEC standards through completing a set of questions that are related to language development. Details are available from the course menu on the left.	45 points	
Total = 100%		100 points	

Your final grade will be based on the total points you accumulate throughout the semester from your participation, reflections, discussions, and the final project. Total points earned will be scaled to a Plus/Minus Grading System (<http://www.bulletin.uga.edu/PlusMinusGradingFAQ.html>):

A = 94.0000 – 100	C+ = 77.000 – 79.999
A- = 90.000 – 93.999	C = 73.000 – 76.999
B+ = 87.000 – 89.999	C- = 70.000 – 72.999
B = 83.000 – 86.999	D = 60.000 – 69.999
B- = 80.000 – 82.999	F = Below 60.000