

The University of Edinburgh

The Moray House School of Education

School Postgraduate Studies Committee

17 March 2016

TESOL for Young Learners (EDUA11026)

Brief description of the paper

This paper proposes changes to the course TESOL for Young Learners in order to 1) incorporate recent developments in the field since it was last taught (2012) and 2) to make the Learning Outcomes in line with the School's new requirements. This paper includes: the present cover sheet, the revised course descriptor and a description of the rationale supporting the proposed changes.

Action requested

For homologation. Convener's Action was taken to approve this paper and it was forwarded to the Board of Studies for consideration at its meeting on 11 March 2017

Resource implications

Does the paper have resource implications? No

Risk assessment

Does the paper include a risk analysis? No

Equality and diversity

Have due considerations been given to the equality impact of this paper? Yes.

Freedom of information

Can this paper be included in open business? Yes

Any other relevant information

This proposal will be presented at the meeting by the Course Organizer Dr. Florence Bonacina-Pugh, Teaching Fellow in TESOL.

Originator of the paper

This paper was prepared by Dr. Florence Bonacina-Pugh, Teaching Fellow in TESOL on March 05 2016.

Course descriptor: TESOL for Young Learners (EDUA11026)

Credit rating: 20 credits, SCQF Level 11

Course leader: Dr. Florence Bonacina-Pugh

Rationale and overview

This course builds on a number of issues that have been covered in the TESOL compulsory courses and reconsiders them in the light of what is known about teaching young learners and their learning. Course students will consider how learning English fits into the overall learning experience of young learners, what insights research has given into the ways in which children's thinking develops, and the implications of this for learning and teaching English. The course will consider different approaches to teaching, assessing and evaluating young learners, as well as issues related to policy, identity, interculturality and linguistic diversity in the Teaching of English to Young Learners (TEYL) classroom.

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the main theories, principles and concepts underpinning TEYL.
2. Demonstrate extensive, detailed and critical knowledge and understanding of current issues in TEYL such as language policy, identity, interculturality or linguistic diversity.
3. Identify, critically analyse and evaluate different approaches to TEYL such as task-based learning, the use of storytelling or technology.
4. Apply critically and in a context-sensitive manner the main theoretical strands and concepts underpinning TEYL to their future professional practice and research.
5. Develop original and creative sets of materials/lessons/assessment to teach English to Young Learners based on key principles and theories as well as developments at the forefront of the field.

Teaching and Learning

The course will first introduce various definitions of the notion of '*young learner*' and discuss different educational and language policies at play in TEYL (Teaching English to Young Learners) contexts. The main theories, principles and concepts in relation to Second Language Acquisition among young learners will then be critically reviewed and the issue of 'language' description will be discussed. We will also critically analyse and evaluate different approaches to TEYL and to assessing young learners, considering for instance the use of technology, songs, drama and

storytelling. Furthermore, the course will introduce students to current critical issues in TEYL such as linguistic diversity in the classroom, language policy and practices, and interculturality. The course will end with a focus on how to be a ‘child-friendly’ researcher when investigating issues related to TEYL. Each session will involve a one-hour lecture and a two-hour workshop with opportunities to engage in microteaching activities.

Indicative study activities and notional time commitment

Study activity	Time commitment (200 hours in total)
Class contact	Lecture hours 8; Tutorial hours 16
Reading and reflection	48 (i.e. 6 hours per week)
Guided study	32 (i.e. 4 hours per week)
Assignment preparation	96

Indicative reading

Core texts

- Bland, J. 2015. *Teaching English to Young Learners: Critical Issues in Language Teaching with 3 to 12 year olds*. London: Bloomsbury
- Cameron, L. 2001. *Teaching Languages To Young Learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Additional texts

- Cameron, L. 2003. Challenges for ELT from the expansion in teaching children. *ELT Journal* 57 (2): 105-112.
- Copland, F., Garton, S., Burns, A. 2014. Challenges in teaching English to young learners: Global perspectives and local realities. *TESOL Quarterly* 48 (4): 738-762.
- Copland, F. and Garton, S. 2014. Key themes and future directions in teaching English to young learners. *English Language Teaching Journal* 68 (3): 223-230.
- Donaldson, M. 1978. *Children’s Minds*. London: Fontana.
- Enever, J. 2014. Primary English teacher education in Europe. *English Language Teaching Journal* 68 (3): 231-242.
- Gonzalez, V. 2009. *Young Learners, Diverse Children: Celebrating Diversity in Early Childhood*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Corwin.
- Garton, S., Copland, S. and Burns, A. 2011. Investigating Global Practices in Teaching English to Young Learners. *ELT Research Papers* 11-01. London: The British Council.
- Halliwell, S. 1992. *Teaching English in the Primary Classroom*. Harlow: Longman
- Moon, J. and Nikolov, M. (Eds.). 2000. *Research into Teaching English to Young Learners*. Pecs, Hungary: University of Pecs Press.
- Murphy, V. 2014. *Second Language Learning in the Early School Years: Trends and*

Contexts. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Pinter, A. 2011. *Children Learning Second Languages*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pinter, A. 2006. *Teaching Young Language Learners*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rich, S. 2015. *International Perspectives on Teaching English to Young Learners*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Siraj-Blatchford, I. and Clarke, P. 2000. *Supporting Identity, Diversity and Language in the Early Years*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Spolsky, B. and Moon, Y. 2012. *Primary school English-language education in Asia: From policy to practice*. Routledge.

Assessment

Summative

Students will be required to produce a 4000-word essay (100% weight) on one of the areas of TEYL introduced in the course. The essay will include 1) a review of the current debates and recent research findings in the chosen area, 2) the design of materials for a TEYL lesson for a specific group of young learners and 3) a theoretically informed discussion explaining the rationale underpinning the pedagogical decisions made in the essay. The essay will be marked in line with the common post-graduate marking scheme as detailed in the 'Taught Masters Generic Handbook', which students receive at the start of their studies.

Formative

Students will also be asked to engage in an online task on LEARN in order to receive formative feedback from their tutor and peers. This formative assessment will not be marked.

Rationale for the proposed changes

1. Change 1: Learning Outcomes

1.1. Original Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- a. Define the working context;
- b. Discuss critically a variety of theories relating to how children's thinking and learning develop;
- c. Critically evaluate research findings on how children learn their mother tongue, and the implications these have for learning and teaching a second/additional language;
- d. Identify the issues involved in evaluating activities, materials, lessons and
- e. Assessment;
- f. Plan classroom work from a knowledge of principles, and justify decisions reached;
- g. Devise tasks and activities appropriate to specific learners, taking into account the context, culture and their needs;
- h. Develop a range of ways to give feedback to pupils and elicit feedback from them;
- i. Reflect critically on the processes involved in planning, executing and evaluating a set of lessons/ activities

1.2. Proposed Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course students will be able to:

6. Demonstrate a critical understanding of the main theories, principles and concepts underpinning TEYL.
7. Demonstrate extensive, detailed and critical knowledge and understanding of current issues in TEYL such as language policy, identity, interculturality or linguistic diversity.
8. Identify, critically analyse and evaluate different approaches to TEYL such as task-based learning, the use of storytelling or technology.
9. Apply critically and in a context-sensitive manner the main theoretical strands and concepts underpinning TEYL to their future professional practice and research.
10. Develop original and creative sets of materials/lessons/assessment to teach English to Young Learners based on key principles and theories as well as developments at the forefront of the field.

1.3. Rationale for the proposed changes

I have reduced the number of Learning Outcomes from 9 to 5 in order to conform to the new requirements set in the course descriptor form.

LO number 2 also reflects the fact that this course has been updated in line with recent developments in the field.

These new LO have been written in line with the SCQF level 11.

2. Change 2: Assessment

2.1. Original assessment

Course students will demonstrate their ability to design and evaluate a short course or series of lessons using the tools and techniques encountered in the module; the lessons should develop a specific area of learning with a specific group of learners. Course students will also demonstrate an ability to justify choices made from a range of theoretical possibilities; in addition he/she will be able to critically reflect on the processes involved. The assessment will be equivalent to 4,000 words and will comprise:

- lesson plans (20% of total marks awarded)
- materials and resources for activities (20% of total marks awarded)
- rationale for the course/lessons (60% of total marks awarded)

2.2. Proposed assessment

Summative

Students will be required to produce a 4000-word essay (100% weight) on one of the areas of TEYL introduced in the course. The essay will include 1) a review of the current debates and recent research findings in the chosen area, 2) the design of materials for a TEYL lesson for a specific group of young learners and 3) a theoretically informed discussion explaining the rationale underpinning the pedagogical decisions made in the essay. The essay will be marked in line with the common post-graduate marking scheme as detailed in the 'Taught Masters Generic Handbook', which students receive at the start of their studies.

Formative

Students will also be asked to engage in an online task on LEARN in order to receive formative feedback from their tutor and peers. This formative assessment will not be marked.

2.3. Rationale for the proposed changes

Summative assessment: there is now no weighting. The essay is now assessed as a whole as it can prove difficult to separate different sections of an essay that are actually interrelated. The first section of the essay targets Learning Outcomes 1, 2 and 3. The second section of the essay targets Learning Outcome 5. The third section of the essay targets Learning Outcome 4.

Formative assessment: I have proposed a formative assessment to help students choose an area of specialization within the field of TEYL. More specifically, students will be asked during the course to write a post on the group platform of LEARN containing the following:

- A review of some key empirically based research in one area of TEYL (e.g. the use of songs in TEYL)
- A presentation of key resources they are planning to use to design the lesson plan and teaching materials for their essay (e.g. a list of English songs for young learners).

Every student will be required to give feedback on at least two other student's post before the end of the course. All students will receive written feedback in the form of an online comment from their tutor. These two tasks will directly help students prepare for the two aspects of the summative assessment, namely a critical review of the literature in an area of TEYL of their choice and the application of theory to the design of a lesson plan in a given context.

3. Content

I have updated the content of this course in order to incorporate the latest developments in the field since this course was last taught (2012). This can be seen in:

- *The rationale and overview section of the course descriptor.* The last sentence now reads as follows: "The course will consider different approaches to teaching, assessing and evaluating young learners, as well as issues related to policy, identity, interculturality and linguistic diversity in the Teaching of English to Young Learners (TEYL) classroom".
- *The Teaching and Learning section of the course descriptor.* The content of the course remains the same. I added two topics in order to incorporate latest developments in the field. These are: 1. current critical issues in TEYL such as linguistic diversity in the classroom, language policy and practices, and interculturality; and 2. A focus on how to be a 'child-friendly' researcher when investigating issues related to TEYL.
- *The Indicative reading.* For the core readings, I introduced a volume edited by one of the leaders in the field (Professor Janice Bland) and published in 2015, which includes a collection of research-based papers critically addressing key issues in the teaching of English to Young Learners. As for additional readings, I have included some of the latest key publications in the field since 2012, including work adopting a critical approach to language teaching and learning as well as a sociolinguistics perspective on issues such as identity, Language Policy and Practice and the globalisation of English.