1. LOCATION

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
School of Education
EDST5456: Language and Learning: Sociocultural Perspectives (6 units of credit)
Semester 2, 2015

2. STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

Course Convenor: Dr Michael Michell
Office Location: John Goodsell Building, Room 138
Email: m.michell@unsw.edu.au
Phone: 9385 1956
Availability: By appointment only – please email to make a time

3. COURSE DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>EDST5456: Language and Learning: Sociocultural Perspectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credit Points</td>
<td>6 units of credit (6 uoc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td>Includes 150 hours including class contact hours, readings, class preparation, assessment, follow up activities, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schedule

| Lecture | Mondays 5-7pm | Weeks 2-9, 11-13 |
| Location | John Goodsell Building, LG19 |

Summary of Course

This course explores Vygotskian and socio-cultural theory perspectives on language-based pedagogy in school and adult education settings. Key Vygotskian theories of the role of language in learning and semiotic mediation of higher psychological functions of motivation, cognition and affect, and learning activity and activity systems are explored with a view to developing transformational pedagogy in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The course considers the fundamental issue of theory-practice relationships involved in classroom-based educational research and the development of socially inclusive pedagogy that promotes intellectually challenging learning.

Aims of the Course

The course aims to provide language teachers and other educators with an understanding of key sociocultural theoretical perspectives informing pedagogic practice locally and internationally and an ability to apply these perspectives to develop teaching and learning in their own educational contexts.
### Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment/s</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Demonstrate a sound understanding of key Vygotskian and socio-cultural concepts, perspectives and developments in language and general education within school and adult learning contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Demonstrate an ability to critically analyse research and relate it to one’s professional practice and learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Demonstrate an ability to apply understandings of sociocultural concepts and perspectives to designing practical language teaching and learning activity in professional contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Demonstrate an ability to critically analyse and reconceptualise current pedagogy from the perspective of socio-cultural research and theory</td>
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</table>

### Graduate Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Assessment/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 | **Advanced disciplinary knowledge and practices**  
Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the field of education as it relates to their specialist area of study, and the ability to synthesize and apply disciplinary principles and practices to new or complex environments. |
| 2 | **Enquiry-based learning**  
Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of research-based learning and the ability to plan, analyse, present implement and evaluate complex activities that contribute to advanced professional practice and/or intellectual scholarship in education. |
| 3 | **Cognitive skills and critical thinking**  
Demonstrate advanced critical thinking and problem solving skills |
| 4 | **Communication, adaptive and interactional skills**  
Communicate effectively to a range of audiences, and be capable of independent and collaborative enquiry and team-based leadership |
| 5 | **Global outlook**  
Demonstrate an understanding of international perspectives relevant to the educational field |
| 6 | **Ethics**  
Demonstrate an advanced capacity to recognise and negotiate the complex and often contested values and ethical practices that underlie education |
4. **RATIONALE FOR THE INCLUSION OF CONTENT AND TEACHING APPROACH**

Socio-cultural theory constitutes a broad framework of inquiry that seeks to explain the social nature and origins of human learning and development through the mediation of semiotic, psychological, social and cultural processes, practices and systems. Since its beginnings in the work of the Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky and successors, socio-cultural theory has grown into an international field of research encompassing many areas of human activity, including education. This course enables participants to access this rich research tradition and apply socio-cultural understandings to language education practice and research in Australian and international contexts.

With its focus on the role of semiotic and linguistic tools in regulating and developing higher psychological functioning, socio-cultural theory underpinning the course has particular relevance for developing inclusive pedagogies that foster high-order learning and address educational disadvantage among Australia’s diverse learners. Through its conceptual and procedural tools for professional inquiry and action, the course offers teachers a systematic means of integrating instructional theory and practice in classrooms and of transforming knowledge practice necessary for professional renewal and pedagogic innovation. Socio-cultural understandings of language and learning developed through the course will also provide a sound knowledge base for pedagogic leadership in culturally and linguistically diverse education contexts.

5. **TEACHING STRATEGIES**

Teaching strategies used throughout the course are designed to realise sociocultural learning principles. They include:

- weekly face-to-face sessions and online learning through the course website
- teacher presentations and input
- small group cooperative reading and discussion of course texts
- participation in hands-on activities and in-class tasks
- consolidation of understandings through analysis of examples and case studies
- plenary discussions around core issues and debates
- opportunities to reflect on participants’ own teaching in light of new information
- opportunities to reflect on the relation between theory and practice
- opportunities for writing a critical reflection on published research
- opportunities to apply understandings to pedagogical design and practice.

The course utilizes Moodle – an online learning environment where students can access information and course readings, and submit assignments.
## 6. COURSE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class, Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic, required and suggested readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Course introduction and overview</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Semiotic tools and symbolic mediation</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vygotsky's and Feuerstein's perspectives in a study of student learning. Educational psychologist, 30(2), 67-75.


**Mediation and the higher psychological functions**

A


B


C


**Thinking and speaking – internalization and private speech**

A


B


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title and Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Teaching in higher education</em>, 8(2), 263-272.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Learning activity and assessment**

*Learning activity*

A


B


C


**Assessment**


---

**Scaffolding and apprenticeship**


**Developing psyche**

_A_


_B_


_C_


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


C


**Imagination, creativity and learning**

A


B

creativity. Creativity research journal, 5(1), 77-85.


Learning environments, communities and identities

A


B


C


Robinson, C. (2007). Figured world of history learning in a social studies method classroom. The

**Pedagogic practice**

A


B


C


7. RESOURCES

*Required readings*

Set course text:

- Available from the UNSW Bookshop.

*Required weekly readings:*

Required reading for each week is outlined on the Schedule as follows:

**A texts** (key theoretical perspective or overview) – all texts
B texts (elaborations or development of theoretical perspective) - choose one text  
C texts (applications or implications of theoretical perspective) - choose one text  
All weekly readings are available on the Moodle course site.

Further reading


8. ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes Assessed</th>
<th>Graduate Attributes Assessed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Critical reflections on selected readings</td>
<td>2000 words</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1,2,3,4</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,6</td>
<td>28 August 11:59pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learning design</td>
<td>500 words</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1,2,3,4</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,6</td>
<td>5 October 11:59pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sociocultural analysis of pedagogy</td>
<td>3500 words</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1,2,3,4</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5,6</td>
<td>9 November 11:59pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Details
Assignment 1: Critical reflections on selected readings. (Weighting 40%; word limit: 2000)

This task requires you to select three related readings from one of your weekly reading lists from week 2-6 (i.e. readings from group A, B and C texts from the first half of the course). Answer critically the following questions:
1. Briefly summarise and critically analyse the texts, including the writers’ arguments. Explain how the three articles are connected and how they differ from each other.
2. Quote and comment on what you regard as the most important section/quote from each reading and explain why it was significant to you in your teaching context and/or in your professional practice.
3. Conclude with a reflection on how the texts have broadened your thinking in the area.
This assessment task needs to be posted on Moodle by midnight on the due date. A paper copy (with cover sheet attached) also needs to be submitted, either during class or to the School of Education.

Assignment 2: Learning design (Weighting 10%; word limit: 500)

This task requires you to create your own classroom mediating tool designed to develop specific language learning and thinking for students in your particular teaching context. Examples of a tool may be a concept organiser, a model, a SCOBA, a diagram, a task scaffold, a game, a quiz, a worksheet, and a reflection devise. Present your sample of the classroom tool on one page and attach a one page explanation, describing briefly:

1. the curriculum/class/student context for the tool
2. the specific learning purpose of the tool
3. how the tool fits within a sequence of learning activity
4. how the teacher and students use the tool
5. how students’ language and thinking is regulated and ‘pushed’ by using the tool
6. success criteria to judge the tool’s effectiveness
7. how the tool operationalises key sociocultural ideas considered in the course so far, with appropriate references.

A paper copy (with cover sheet attached) of this assessment task needs to be submitted during class on the due date.

Assignment 3: Sociocultural analysis of pedagogy (Weighting 50%; word count: 3500.)

This task requires you to choose one of the ‘pedagogies’ from the list below, research the pedagogy and then critique and re-conceptualise it from the perspective of sociocultural theory. Your analysis should cover:

1. description of the rationale and defining features of the selected pedagogy
2. identification of current developments or issues surrounding the pedagogy
3. identification of relevant sociocultural concepts or perspectives assumed or lacking in the pedagogy (critique)
4. description of what a sociocultural reconstruction of the pedagogy might look like (re-conceptualisation)
5. an explanation of how sociocultural theory enriches or enhances further development of the pedagogy (re-conceptualisation)

- personalised learning
- problem-based learning
- self-regulated learning
- project-based learning
- accelerated learning
- cooperative learning
- multiple intelligence
- learning styles
- content-based language teaching
- communicative language teaching
- task-based language teaching
- quality teaching/productive pedagogy
- direct instruction
- differentiated instruction
- peer tutoring
- academic literacy
- multimodal literacy
- critical literacy
- remedial literacy
- standards-based assessment
- performance assessment
- assessment for learning

This assessment task needs to be posted on Moodle by midnight on the due date. A paper copy (with cover sheet attached) also needs to be submitted, either during class or to the School of Education.

Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Feedback Mechanism</th>
<th>Feedback Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Critical reflections on selected</td>
<td>Feedback sheet</td>
<td>14 September 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>readings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learning design</td>
<td>Feedback sheet</td>
<td>19 October 2015</td>
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</table>

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**UNSW SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**  
**FEEDBACK SHEET**  
**EDST5456: LANGUAGE AND LEARNING: SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVES**

Student Name: [Student Name]  
Student No: [Student No]

**Assessment Task 1: Critical reflections on selected readings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIFIC CRITERIA</th>
<th>(-)</th>
<th>(+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved</strong></td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Summaries of texts; representation of writers’ arguments; explanation of connections between chosen texts.</td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Depth of analysis and/or critique in response to the task</strong></td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discussion and critique of texts; significance to teaching context/professional practice; concluding reflection.</td>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response</strong></td>
<td><img src="image9" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image10" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of supporting texts to evidence argument; knowledge of arguments relevant to chosen texts.</td>
<td><img src="image11" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image12" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure and organisation of response</strong></td>
<td><img src="image13" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image14" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organisation of writing at whole text, paragraph and sentence levels.</td>
<td><img src="image15" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image16" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation of response according to appropriate academic and linguistic conventions</strong></td>
<td><img src="image17" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image18" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of referencing conventions; accuracy and appropriateness of academic English.</td>
<td><img src="image19" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image20" alt="Image" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**GENERAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT TIME**

Lecturer: Dr Michael Michell  
Date: [Date]  
Recommended: /20  
Weighting: 40%

NB: The ticks in the various boxes are designed to provide feedback to students; they are not given equal weight in determining the recommended grade. Depending on the nature of the assessment task, lecturers may also contextualize and/or amend these specific criteria. The recommended grade is tentative only, subject to standardisation processes and approval by the School of Education Learning and Teaching Committee.
### SPECIFIC CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved</th>
<th>(-)</th>
<th>(+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Presentation of a classroom mediating tool with accompanying explanation.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depth of analysis and/or critique in response to the task</th>
<th>(-)</th>
<th>(+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Mediating tool design fosters specific language learning and thinking in students through clever and creative application of relevant sociocultural concepts and perspectives.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response</th>
<th>(-)</th>
<th>(+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Mediating tool and accompanying explanation draws on relevant sociocultural theory research.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure and organisation of response</th>
<th>(-)</th>
<th>(+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Brevity and clarity of mediating tool and accompanying explanation.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation of response according to appropriate academic and linguistic conventions</th>
<th>(-)</th>
<th>(+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Use of referencing conventions.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### GENERAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT TIME

Lecturer: Dr Michael Michell
Date
Recommended: /20 (FL PS CR DN HD) Weighting: 10%

NB: The ticks in the various boxes are designed to provide feedback to students; they are not given equal weight in determining the recommended grade. Depending on the nature of the assessment task, lecturers may also contextualize and/or amend these specific criteria. The recommended grade is tentative only, subject to standardisation processes and approval by the School of Education Learning and Teaching Committee.
**UNSW SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**  
**FEEDBACK SHEET**  
**EDST5456: LANGUAGE AND LEARNING: SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVES**

**Student Name:**  
**Student No:**  
**Assessment Task 3:** Sociocultural analysis of pedagogy

### SPECIFIC CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
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</table>

#### Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved
- Analysis encompasses research, and sociocultural critique and re-conceptualisation of selected pedagogy.

#### Depth of analysis and/or critique in response to the task
- Analysis defines the selected pedagogy and identifies current developments/issues
- Analysis applies sociocultural perspectives in discussing, critiquing and re-conceptualising selected pedagogy

#### Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response
- Analysis draws on a range of relevant sociocultural theory research to discuss, critique and re-conceptualise selected pedagogy

#### Structure and organisation of response
- Organisation of writing at whole text, paragraph and sentence levels.

#### Presentation of response according to appropriate academic and linguistic conventions
- Use of referencing conventions; accuracy and appropriateness of academic English.

### GENERAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT TIME

Lecturer: Dr Michael Michell  
Date  
Recommended: /20 (FL PS CR DN HD)  
Weighting: 50%

NB: The ticks in the various boxes are designed to provide feedback to students; they are not given equal weight in determining the recommended grade. Depending on the nature of the assessment task, lecturers may also contextualise and/or amend these specific criteria. The recommended grade is tentative only, subject to standardisation processes and approval by the School of Education Learning and Teaching Committee.