



Second Language Learning & Teaching

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COMPLETE COURSE DESCRIPTION:

English 110P: Second Language Learning and Teaching

Course description: This course is designed to introduce students to the major theories and issues in second language learning and teaching. The course focuses on important questions, such as: (a) Do adults learn a second language in the same way that children learn their first language? (b) What are some other factors besides age that influence language learning, and how do they affect it? (c) Does proficiency in the first language help or hinder the acquisition of a second language? (d) What are some of the major teaching methods that have been or are currently being implemented in language classrooms, and what are their underlying theoretical assumptions? (e) How do national and state policies affect English language learners in secondary schools? These questions and others are addressed through readings, discussions, workshops, and projects.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS:

The course usually consists of 25-35 undergraduate and graduate students. It is required for several different programs: for pre-service high school English teachers, for the Certificate of Advanced Study in TESOL, and for Master's degree students in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). It is also an elective for Liberal Studies majors (future elementary school teachers) and general English (language track) majors.

DESCRIPTION OF HOW ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS CONNECT THE ONE BOOK'S THEMES, ISSUES, AND IDEAS TO SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY CONTENT, PROCESSES, AND COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As the themes and issues of the One Book (Funny in Farsi) concern various aspects of second language speakers'/immigrants' lives and their perspectives on American culture, the assignment requires students to engage in a thorough analysis of the content in order to connect what they read in the book to the particular area they focus on in the class. Specifically, the students will be asked to identify chapters that are relevant to the issues and theories in second language learning and teaching and write a response paper, explaining how those chapters are relevant and how they relate to their own personal experiences of learning and/or using a second language. Optionally, the students may choose to interview at least one ESL (English as a Second Language) learner about the issues described in the relevant chapters of the book and incorporate the results in their papers. The students also will be asked to address in the response paper how they will apply what they learned from the book to their community life with second language speakers/immigrants and their future teaching. Based on their response papers, students will have a class discussion during which they will share their ideas and findings.

COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY/LESSON PLAN/ASSIGNMENT:

Learning Outcomes: As the assignment requires students to reflect on their personal experiences or to learn about other second language speakers'/immigrants' experiences in relation to what they read in the book and what they learn from the class, they will enhance their understanding of various issues that involve second language learning and teaching. In particular, they will be sensitized to affective and sociocultural dimensions of second language learning and teaching by becoming more familiar with what second language speakers/immigrants go through emotionally and socioculturally in their everyday lives. As a result, the students will be better prepared to be more considerate members of a diverse community and more perceptive second language teachers.

Due Dates: The assignment will be due between October 6th and 9th (tentative) and the class activity will take place during the same week.

Tasks Assigned (Process and Product): The tasks are explained in the following handouts.

Handout 1 (Assignment Instructions)

Instructions: Read the book "Funny in Farsi" very carefully and write a double-spaced two-page response paper (11- or 12-point font). Please follow the guidelines below to organize your paper.

- A. Identify at least two chapters that you think are relevant to second language learning and teaching and provide a brief summary of the chapters.
- B. Explain how they are relevant by referring to the theories and issues that we have discussed in the class.
- C. Describe how you can relate A and B to your own experiences. Alternatively, you can interview one ESL learner/immigrant regarding A and B. (Instructions for the interview will be provided on a separate sheet.)
- D. Discuss how the things that you learned from the book, the reflection, or the interview may affect your life as a member of a diverse community and your future teaching that may involve second language learners.

Handout 2 (Interview Prompt)

Instructions: Briefly summarize your chosen chapters to the interviewee and ask her/him at least three questions. For example, "Firoozeh Dumas wrote a story about how she/her family.... What do you think of that? Have you had any similar experiences? What are some challenges or difficulties that you face or have faced as a person who speaks English as a second language?"

Handout 3 (In-class Small Group Activity)

Instructions: Get into a group of 3-4 and share your ideas and findings with your group members, while answering the following questions.

1. What chapters did you find are relevant to the issues that we have talked about in regard to second language learning and teaching and why?
2. Have you had any similar experiences? Or, did you hear any similar/interesting experiences from the people that you interviewed? If so, briefly describe them to your group members.
3. In what ways will this book and the assignment influence your future teaching?

Assessment Criteria: Students' assignment and participation will be evaluated according the following criteria.

- How clearly does the student understand the content of the book and the related issues?
- How well does the student connect the content of the book to the issues discussed in the class?
- How appropriately does the student relate what she learned from the book and the class to her personal and other people's experiences?
- How adequately does the student demonstrate her learning and display willingness to apply it to her future life and career?

This resource was made possible by the 2008 State One Book Faculty Development Grant Program, with funding from Wells Fargo. While many of the assignments and activities were designed for a specific course and for the 2008-2009 One Book, [Funny in Farsi: A Memoir of Growing Up Iranian in America](#) by Firoozeh Dumas, they may be adapted to other courses and future One Book selections. For additional One Book resources, please visit our website www.csus.edu/onebook.