

Master of Education (M.Ed.)

Title of the course: S. LI. 4(d): Early Literacy: Theory and Practice
(Semester: I, II, III & IV)

Credits: 4

MM: 100 (External: 70 and Internal: 30)

Contact Weeks: 15

Introduction of the Course:

It is very important to understand the nature of literacy in the early years. In India, many children depend solely on schools to make their first contacts with literacy. If they fail to acquire literacy in the beginning years of schooling, then their survival later on is bound to be difficult. Lately, there has been a lot of focus on early literacy in India, possibly due to the increased enrolment caused by the RTE Act. There is a daunting task of providing literacy instruction to a large number of children & from varying socio-economic, cultural, linguistic, and literacy backgrounds. Yet, very little is understood about the processes of early literacy acquisition and the challenges of teaching it. This paper will examine early literacy acquisition from both development and sociocultural perspectives and discuss its implications for classroom instruction. The challenges of early literacy in India will be discussed in detail.

Learning Outcomes

After completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Understand the process of early literacy acquisition
2. Analyse data related to children's early literacy interactions
3. Understand the challenges of early literacy instruction in India

Number of Units (5)

Weeks 15 = 60 hours

Unit 1: Oral Language Development

(3 weeks = 12 hours)

- Theoretical perspective on oral language development
- Its relevance in understanding literacy acquisition.

Unit 2: Literacy Development

(5 weeks = 20 hours)

- Understanding the nature of literacy development from an Emergent literacy perspective. Vygotskian theory of development.
- Examining the development of various aspects of reading and writing, including concepts about print, spelling, functions of print, and comprehension.
- Early Reading in a second language.



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Unit 3: Socio-cultural Perspectives

(3 weeks = 12 hours)

- Importance of context: examining the language and literacy background of children in pre-primary and primary school.
- Examining the classroom as a special context of language and literacy. Examining theories that account for differential achievement in literacy. Critique of deficit model.
- Exploring alternative models, including the discontinuity model. Critical literacy in early childhood.

Unit 4: Instructional Implications for Pre-primary and Primary Classrooms (2 weeks = 8 hours)

- Issues related to teaching early literacy include the classroom environment, the teacher's role, early literacy curricula, and controversies related to them.
- Literacy assessment

Unit 5: Early Literacy in India (2 weeks = 8 hours)

- Critical analysis of surveys on early literacy achievement.
- Status of early literacy instruction in India
- Examining the policy documents related to early literacy in India: NCF, Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat, FLN
- Early literacy interventions in India
- The challenge of reading in a second language in India

Practicum/Suggested Projects/Assignments (Any Two)

1. Conduct an early literacy assessment process with preschool children
2. Analyse samples of children's early writing.
3. Review early literacy intervention projects developed in India (e.g., Mathura Pilot Project developed by NCERT)

Note: On the basis of the above, the teacher may design his/her own relevant projects/ assignments.

Essential/ Recommended Readings

- Avery, C (2002). *And with a light touch: Learning about reading, writing, and teaching with first graders*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann
- Bloome, D. (2012). Classroom ethnography. In M. Grenfell et al., *Language, Ethnography, and Education* (pp.7-26). New York: Routledge.

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- Clay, M.M. (1991). *Becoming Literate: The Construction of Inner Control*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, New Zealand
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- De, A., Khera, R., Samson, M., k, Shiv Kumar, A.K. (2011). *PROBE Revisited: Report on elementary education in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
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- Ferriero, E & Teberosky, A. (1982). *Literacy before schooling*. Portsmouth, N.H: Heinemann Educational Books.
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- Kumar, K. (2009). *What is worth teaching?* (4 ed.). New Delhi: Orient Blackswan Private Limited.
- Larson, J, & Marsh, J. (2013), *Handbook of Early childhood literacy*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Mason, J. M. & Sinha, S. (1993). Emerging literacy in the early childhood years: Applying a Vygotskian model of learning and development. In B. Spodek (Ed.),

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Handbook of Research on the education of young children (pp. 137-150). New York, NY: Macmillan.

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Teaching Learning Process

The course will be taught through interactive pedagogic methods such as classroom discussion, debates, film discussions, critical media analysis, collaborative learning tasks which enhance reading comprehension of core writings in the area and innovative projects. Reflective expression and learning will be encouraged.

Assessment Method

The assessment will be formative in nature and will factor in student participation. Individual and group tasks and assignments will be given. Summative evaluation will be done through end- semester examination.

Key words: Literacy Development, Literacy Assessment, FLN, NCERT.



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