



ECHE8230

Language and Literacy in Early Childhood

Session 2, Online-scheduled-weekday 2026

Macquarie School of Education

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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Tutor/Marker

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Marker

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N/A

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

[Admission to (MTeach(0-5) or GradCertEChild) and (ECED600 or ECHE6000 or ECED817)]
or [admission to MEChild or MEd or MEdLead or GradCertIndigenousEd or MIndigenousEd or MSpecEd or GradCertEdS]

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit will explore what language is and how it develops in early childhood, with a main focus on the years from birth to five. The relationship between language, learning and culture will be investigated. Students will consider different definitions of literacy and examine how oral language in the early years of life relates to subsequent knowledge of written, visual and aural texts. Issues to be addressed include how to create a language and literacy rich environment and the central role of adults in supporting children's language and literacy development in a range of contexts.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Use appropriate metalanguage when analysing language structure and function.

ULO2: Apply knowledge of the relationship between oral language, adult–child interaction and literacy development.

ULO3: Critically evaluate early childhood settings in terms of language and literacy development.

ULO4: Employ and develop pedagogical strategies for promoting language and literacy development.

ULO5: Use peer reviewed research to justify decision making.

ULO6: Use academic language appropriately to express ideas and arguments.

General Assessment Information

General Submission Information

All written assessments must be submitted electronically. Please format assessments using 12-point font and 1.5 spacing. Submissions must meet the required file type and formatting specifications outlined in the assessment guidelines. If you are unsure about the file format or have technical difficulties, it is your responsibility to seek assistance before the submission deadline. Students should be careful to check that they submit the correct file for an assessment as no re-submissions will be accepted after the due date and time, including instances where students upload an incorrect file. It is not the responsibility of unit staff to contact students who have failed to submit assessments. If you have any missing items of assessment, it is your responsibility to contact the unit convenor.

Turnitin plagiarism detection software is used to check all written assessments. It is the responsibility of all students to ensure that their submitted work is in a format compatible with Turnitin software for plagiarism checking. Students can use Turnitin's Originality Report as a learning tool to improve their academic writing if this option is made available in the unit.

Word limits are strictly applied, with + or – 10% applicable. Work above the word limit will not be marked.

Academic Integrity

Students should be aware of and apply the University policy on academic integrity (see: <https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=3>).

Artificial Intelligence

<https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/assessments/ai-and-assessment>

<https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=394>

Special Consideration /Late Penalties

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, **a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day to late submissions, up until the 7th calendar day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted.** Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue.

Important to note:

Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/ presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs) will be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application.

Students should not request an informal arrangement from their tutor, lecturer or Unit Convenor (or equivalent).

Where an application for Special Consideration is approved and the outcome is an extension to the due date of a task, submissions that are received after the new due date will be subject to late penalties that are calculated from the new due date. This only applies where the outcome is an extension to the due date – see the [Special Consideration Policy](#) for a schedule of all possible outcomes.

A Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

Applications must be made via [Service Connect](#).

University Policy on Grading

Assignments will be awarded grades ranging from HD to F according to guidelines set out in the [University's Grading System](#) and [University Assessment Policy](#).

To attain a pass or higher grade in Professional Experience a student must obtain a satisfactory in both the Professional Experience component and a pass or higher grade in the academic component. For Professional Experience units the Professional Experience Evaluation Report is marked as Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. The Macquarie Teaching Performance Assessment (MQTPA - in final WIL/ PEx units) is marked as Not met, Met or Exceeds.

Results

Results shown in iLearn, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed because they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit [Service Connect](#).

Withdrawing from this unit

If you are considering withdrawing from this unit, please seek academic advice via [Service Connect](#).

ct before doing so as this unit may be a co-requisite or prerequisite for units in the following sessions and may impact your course progression.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Shared Reading	50%	No	06/ 09/ 2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Fostering infant-toddler language and literacy in ECEC settings	50%	No	08/ 11/ 2026	Individual	Yes	Open

Shared Reading

Assessment Type [1](#): Professional task

Indicative Time on Task [2](#): 40 hours

Due: **06/09/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension [3](#): Yes

AI Approach: Open

Students analyse an interaction between an adult and a child during shared reading of a picture book, select a picture book for that child and design a literacy learning experience for that child using the selected picture book. 2500 words.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Use appropriate metalanguage when analysing language structure and function.
- Apply knowledge of the relationship between oral language, adult–child interaction and literacy development.
- Employ and develop pedagogical strategies for promoting language and literacy development.
- Use peer reviewed research to justify decision making.
- Use academic language appropriately to express ideas and arguments.

Fostering infant-toddler language and literacy in ECEC settings

Assessment Type [1](#): Professional task

Indicative Time on Task [2](#): 40 hours

Due: **08/11/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Drawing on research literature on language and literacy development in the infant and toddler years, and observations of infant-toddler environments, students write a report with evidence-based recommendations for designing and evaluating the physical and interactional environment of infant-toddler rooms in ECEC settings in terms of its potential to promote language and literacy learning. 2500 words

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Use appropriate metalanguage when analysing language structure and function.
- Apply knowledge of the relationship between oral language, adult–child interaction and literacy development.
- Critically evaluate early childhood settings in terms of language and literacy development.
- Use peer reviewed research to justify decision making.
- Use academic language appropriately to express ideas and arguments.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- [Academic Success](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation.

³ An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the [Service Connect Portal](#).

Delivery and Resources

Unit Structure

The unit structure can be found in the university timetable [Creating your timetable - Enrolling | Macquarie University, Sydney \(mq.edu.au\)](#). In the tutorials students will discuss issues and questions arising from the lectures and prescribed readings. They are expected to base their arguments/discussions on evidence from published research and other relevant material. There will be a supporting iLearn site for the unit providing additional readings, links and materials.

Student workload and requirements

Before commencing this unit, please ensure that you can meet all requirements, including workload requirements, attendance expectations (if relevant to your mode of enrolment), and assessment submission requirements.

Credit points indicate the approximate hours that a student is expected to spend studying in order to pass a unit. One credit point equals 15 hours; thus, students are expected to spend approximately 10 hours per week (including the two weeks of mid-session recess) studying this unit (i.e. approximately 150hr). Study includes viewing all lectures, participating in tutorials and learning activities, completing set readings and background readings, completing assignments, and using the unit's iLearn site.

Independent study is strongly encouraged in this unit as is participation in online discussions and the completion of study tasks posted on iLearn.

Please ensure that you have sufficient time to dedicate to your studies before attempting this unit. We are sympathetic that students often have significant domestic and work-related responsibilities. To be fair to our staff and to other students, however, these cannot be used to justify incomplete work or extension requests.

Classes and attendance

All students are expected to:

- View all lectures in the unit.
- Complete any online tasks before or during the weeks in which these are scheduled.
- Be familiar with relevant lectures and complete the specified reading preparation before scheduled classes and online activities.
- Actively contribute to online discussions and scheduled classes.
- Complete and submit all assignments.

Required texts

There is one required textbook:

Fellowes, J. & Oakley, G. (2024). *Language, literacy and early childhood education* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.

There is also one required curriculum document:

Australian Government Department of Education [AGDE] (2022). *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (V2.0)*. Australian Government Department of Education for the Ministerial Council.

NOTE: There are also other required readings that will be available through the library's website and/or the unit's iLearn website.

Access and technical assistance

Information for students about access to the online component of this unit is available at ilearn.mq.edu.au/login/MQ/. You will need to enter your student username and password.

Please do NOT contact the Unit Convenor regarding iLearn technical help.

No extensions will be given for any technical issues. Allow enough time for your submissions.

Assistance is available from IT Helpdesk ph: 1800 67 4357, or log a request at help.mq.edu.au. OneHelp is the online IT support service for both students and staff.

This unit requires students to use several ICT and software skills:

- Internet access: The iLearn site contains materials for this unit; it is also required for the online submission of all Assessment Tasks, and for the use of Turnitin submission for ALL tasks.
- Word processing, visual representations, and document formatting: You are required to use an appropriate form of software to present your assignments.
- Uploading of assessment tasks to iLearn.

Relation between assessment task and learning outcomes

Assessment Type	ACECQA curriculum specifications
Assignment 1 (50%). Case study/analysis: Shared Reading Students analyse an interaction between an adult and a child during shared reading of a picture book, select a picture book for that child and design a literacy learning experience for that child using the selected picture book.	1.1, 1.2, 1.6 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7 3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 3.9 4.5 6.4, 6.5
Assignment 2 (50%). Promoting infant-toddler language and literacy in ECEC settings Drawing on research literature on language and literacy development in the infant and toddler years, students write a report with evidence-based recommendations for designing and evaluating the physical and interactional environment of infant-toddler rooms in ECEC settings in terms of its potential to promote language and literacy learning.	1.1, 1.2, 1.6 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7 3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 3.9 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 6.4, 6.5

ACECQA Standards

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) standards addressed in this unit are:

1. Psychology and child development

1.1 Learning, development and care

1.2. Language development

1.6. Diversity, difference and inclusivity

1.8. Transitions and continuity of learning (including transition to school).

2. Teaching Pedagogies

- 2.1. Alternative pedagogies and curriculum approaches
- 2.2. Play-based pedagogies
- 2.4. Teaching methods and strategies
- 2.5. Children with diverse needs and backgrounds
- 2.6. Working with children who speak languages other than, or in addition to, English
- 2.7. Contemporary society and pedagogy

3. Education and curriculum studies

- 3.1. Early Years Learning Framework
- 3.4. Language and literacy
- 3.5. English as an additional language
- 3.9. Curriculum Planning, programming and evaluation

4. Family and community contexts

- 4.1. Developing family and community partnerships
- 4.3. ATSI perspectives
- 4.4. Socially inclusive practice
- 4.5. Culture, diversity and inclusion

6. Early childhood professional practice leadership

- 6.4. Advocacy
- 6.5. Research

Unit Schedule

A detailed and dated schedule with weekly readings is provided on iLearn.

Topics covered in this unit:

- What is involved in learning to read?
- Multiliteracies
- Emergent literacy, oral language and shared reading
- Emergent literacy: comprehension-oriented aspects
- Emergent literacy: code-breaking aspects (phonological and phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, brief introduction to phonics)

- Emergent writing in the years prior to school
- Learning language: infants and toddlers (1): Language learning in the first three years
- Learning language: infants and toddlers (2): Supporting language development in home vs. group care contexts
- Authentic language and literacy assessment in the early years
- Language, literacy and culture (1): Home and family influences on language and literacy development
- Language, literacy and culture (2): Social positioning, language and literacy
- Language, literacy and bilingualism: Children learning English as an additional language (EAL)
- Australian Indigenous Languages, Aboriginal English, language and literacy

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Ask a Study Coach](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)

- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

School of Education Procedures

In addition, the following policies and procedures for the Macquarie School of Education apply to this unit.

Academic Progression Policy

This unit is a part of a professional course listed on Schedules 2 and 3 of the [Academic Progression Policy](#). This course has additional requirements that are applicable for the full duration of the course, including course-specific Inherent Requirements, Fitness to Practice requirements and other compulsory course requirements. It also has rigorous academic progression standards. Inability to meet these requirements may result in a withdrawal of offer of admission and/or permanent exclusion from the course in accordance with the General Coursework Rules.

Communication

It is the student's responsibility to check all electronic communication on a weekly basis. Communication may occur via:

- Official MQ Student Email Address
- The Dialogue function on iLearn
- Other iLearn communication functions

Attendance and Participation

See the University timetable for information about when classes begin in this unit. [Creating your timetable - Enrolling | Macquarie University, Sydney \(mq.edu.au\)](#)

Students are required to attend the tutorial in which they are enrolled. Any changes to tutorial enrolments must be completed officially through e-Student. Please do not contact the unit convenor to request a change.

There is an attendance requirement in this unit. Initial Teacher Education (ITE) degrees must ensure that teacher education students meet unit learning outcomes, course learning outcomes and the Graduate level of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and/or ACECQA requirements. Since units are within an accredited ITE degree, Macquarie

School of Education is required to demonstrate these outcomes and standards have been taught, practised and assessed. To meet 'taught, practiced and assessed' accreditation requirements, ITE units have mandatory attendance, with an expectation of at least 80% attendance at tutorials. Please see your unit iLearn site for details of how to meet attendance requirements in this unit.

Attendance at all tutorials is expected and will be recorded. Make up tasks may be given if attendance is missed to ensure all content is covered to meet accreditation requirements.

Unit information based on version 2026.03 of the [Handbook](#)