

4 Hours

**Western Oregon University
Final Written Comprehensive Examinations**

**Master of Science in Education
ESOL/Bilingual Education**

Choose one question from each of the four major categories below. For each answer, please make sure you provide a knowledgeable discussion of theory, research and practice. You should answer a total of **four** questions.

1. History, Research and Current Practice (*choose one*)

- a. Bilingual education is defined as any education program that uses two languages for instruction. Bilingual education usually involves the study of literacy and/or content areas (e.g., math, science, and social studies) through two languages, as well as a language development component (e.g., ELD or ESL). Choose one **program model** of bilingual education. Describe the main aspects of the model (program length, how the two languages are used for instruction, student make-up, goals, and orientation). Also, explain how language and content are taught within this model, and the necessary aspects for implementation (e.g., teacher qualifications, student make-up, school resources, etc.). Finally, offer a critique of your chosen program model based on up-to-date theory and research. **Please make sure you discuss significant theoretical concepts, cite relevant research studies, and provide the names of important scholars in the field.**

OR

- b. Both the courts and the legislature have influenced the education of Emergent Bilingual. Sometimes the decisions of these bodies work in concert, and other times their decisions can cause confusion for administrators and practitioners in schools. First, discuss a court decision (either Supreme or state) that impacts the education of EBs. Then, describe a related state law or federal act. How well do these two policies work together? What impact do they have at the school level? **Please make sure you discuss significant theoretical concepts, cite relevant research studies, and provide the names of important scholars in the field.**

2. Culture (*choose one*)

- a. Discuss the role that culture plays in children's development and learning, and explain how *schooling* functions as a major variable in the acculturation of Emergent Bilinguals (EBs). Also, describe some assimilationist policies often adopted by U.S. schools that lead to the academic failure of EBs. Finally, discuss several culturally-responsive practices that teachers and administrators can implement to facilitate the academic success of EBs. **Please make sure you discuss significant theoretical concepts, cite relevant research studies, and provide the names of important scholars in the field.**

OR

- b. Educators today recognize the value of involving parents in the classroom and in the school as a whole. From a theoretical perspective, discuss the particular importance of involving parents of Emergent Bilinguals (EBs) in schools. Also, explain the main challenges related to EBs' parent involvement, and describe in detail at least two strategies that have been found to be effective in addressing these challenges. **Please make sure you discuss significant theoretical concepts, cite relevant research studies, and provide the names of important scholars in the field.**

3. Language and Language Acquisition (*choose one*)

- a. Language is a complex system. Linguists have divided the study of language into various subsystems: *phonology* (the study of sound patterns), *morphology* (the study of how words are built), *syntax* (the study of the structure of sentences), *semantics* (the study of the meanings of a language), and *pragmatics* (the study of language use in social contexts). Choose one of the subsystems of language and discuss the following points:

- important concepts/definitions related to this aspect of language
- particular issues/difficulties encountered by second language learners
- teaching strategies/tools/activities to help EBs master this aspect of language.

Please make sure you discuss significant theoretical concepts, cite relevant research studies, and provide the names of important scholars in the field.

OR

- b. Several important theories have shaped our current understanding of second language learning and development. Choose three current theories of second language acquisition and discuss the following points:

- the main theorist(s)
- the major concepts/definitions associated with the theory
- appropriate classroom applications that derive from the theory.

Please make sure you discuss significant theoretical concepts, cite relevant research studies, and provide the names of important scholars in the field.

4. Instruction and Assessment (*choose one*)

- a. Addressing both the content and language needs of Emergent Bilinguals is a critical task for ESOL educators. Describe the ways in which effective teachers can scaffold rigorous content-area instruction (math, social studies, etc.) while fostering language acquisition (English proficiency and L1, if applicable). Incorporate the following features: theoretical guiding principles, standards-based lessons, research-based techniques, curricular accommodations, and sheltered strategies. Include other pertinent information that you consider vital to meeting the social and academic needs of your language learners. How can these features be integrated into an effective lesson plan for EBs? What forms of assessment can be incorporated to gauge progress in both content and language?

Please make sure you discuss significant theoretical concepts, cite relevant research studies, and provide the names of important scholars in the field.

- b. Achieving high levels of reading and writing skills is crucial for success in K-12 schooling in the United States. Discuss the following points related to literacy instruction for Emergent Bilingual:
- transferring literacy from first to second languages
 - important principles derived from research on literacy instruction of EBs
 - strategies that support EBs' development of reading and writing skills
 - effective assessment practices in literacy instruction, including formal and informal tools, and their use in decisions related to instruction and placement.

Please make sure you discuss significant theoretical concepts, cite relevant research studies, and provide the names of important scholars in the field.

OR

- c. Because content knowledge is heavily impacted by English language proficiency on traditional and norm-referenced tests, quality assessments are especially vital for Emergent Bilinguals. Making reference to theorists and experts in the field, discuss at least two critical issues that impact the assessment of EBs:
- cultural, racial, and linguistic bias in tests
 - testing language versus content knowledge
 - appropriate testing accommodations for Emergent Bilinguals
 - formal testing instruments versus alternative assessment strategies
 - policies that impact EBs, such as tracking, retention, and exit exams.

Please make sure you discuss significant theoretical concepts, cite relevant research studies, and provide the names of important scholars in the field.