

So let's consider several ways that we might begin to study language and when going through this I'd like you to consider the particular kinds of texts that you would teach in your subject area.

Language and learning in our of course synonymous with each other in so far as we cannot teach without language or making some kind of sign in communication and that's essential for the learning process. The ways to study language involve looking quite closely at language in what's most important of all is that we help students to engage with enthusiasm and deep levels of engagement with the work they're looking at.

I say looking at because typically when we study language we are thinking about studying the written form of language. As you can see there are several important aspects to studying any text in order to help students scaffold their learning and to acquire the knowledge within.

One of the key and most important aspects of this is to study vocabulary. In order to study vocabulary is important to look at which kinds of words and phrases provide students with the most difficulty or present the basic concepts they need to get.

If they can't understand the language it goes without saying that they won't understand the concepts.

So identifying key vocabulary is a central part of any good teacher's practice. What that means is that usually before teaching a text, the teacher needs to read carefully and look for the kind words that are going to provide the students with the most difficulty.

It goes beyond simply defining these words, however, because in order to understand and learn a word we cannot just encounter it once. The more we use it and the more we use in different modalities and contexts, the more ingrained that word becomes in people's consciousness.

They have better recall of it and better understanding of the different meanings that each word might have. So when presenting a new vocabulary to students, vocabulary that we think they need to have in order to understand the message and the ideas and concepts being presented in the curriculum, it's not only important to have them see it, in this case they might see it in written form or the teacher might write it on a blackboard something like that, but it's also important to have them use it.

If they just see it once they're likely to forget a key vocabulary word in the same day. However, if they see it and have the opportunity to say it out loud, that kind of verbalization, the putting up the word into their body so they learn to express it and

the way it should be pronounced, also really helps to reinforce their learning of the word and the related concepts.

Even better, if having moved from a reading modality into a speaking modality, they are then able to write the word in a sentence which presents its context to them. So when giving the definition they should write the word physically, by hand - handwriting if they can or typing - and use it in a way that it makes sense within a sentence.

This will definitely improve the recall they have for that word and its related meanings. Therefore identifying key language that is key vocabulary often these take the form a nouns or verbs, more complex ones. The more they are able to shift modalities to speaking and to writing, the longer they can recall it.

Seeing it once, you have a day; seeing and speaking it, you might have a whole week. Seeing it, speaking it, and writing it in context, students are likely to retain that for some time, some weeks.

And if they continue to use it on various occasions, over a few weeks a time, they might just retain that concept for a lifetime.

The next thing that we want to understand is how sentence structure informs meaning. And it's really good when trying to teach students how to write in particular genres to look at the types of sentences that are typical of expressing ideas in specific genres.

One example might be in note-taking. Very common in note-taking is that we don't put the major parts for the sentence first. The sentence is often written in fragments.

This is a kind note taking a of notetaking genre, convention for sentence structure.

The difference of course is quite dramatic between the kinds of the sentence structures used in academic writing, sentences that are often quite long and complex, meaning they use many different clauses and try to define terms as they use them, as opposed to the kinds of expressions we use when speaking.

Often when speaking we talk in run on sentences; we don't need the idea of periods; and often when people are speaking they speak in fragments.

So when somebody says "have you studied that text today?" "oh yeah". That's all you get, but it expresses meaning quite clearly as long as the speaker and listener are in the same space in referring to the same thing.

There's all kinds of extralinguistic clues to what the meaning of the conversation is. Another example to point that out would be anytime you hear one side to the conversation it's often difficult to understand what the two people are talking about

because we're missing half of the words and we are missing half of the contextual clues that would tell us what the nature of that conversation is.

So it's good to understand what different kinds of sentence structures inform the genres that we want students to be able to express their ideas in.

As well we need to be able to aid, scaffold, and assess students comprehension of the language we are using before we can move ahead and continue to put new parts of the curriculum on things we've already talked.

So comprehension becomes an important part of language learning where we can present them with more complex sentences and see if when reading them and explaining what the sentence says if they get all the nuances of meaning that it contains.

This is important because many times students understand words to have a particular meaning but the meanings of the word change depending on the context.

So one type of word we might look at which can change its semantics, its meaning depending on the context would be a tiny little word like the word "set".

We know for example that we came a set a fire, we can set something in stone, something can be set up...

There's all kinds of different uses of that word. It can be a noun, it can be a verb. In fact some of the meanings of word set are quite contradictory. When we say a phrase like "it's set in stone", we mean it's never changing, it's staying in the same place and in the same state forever.

However, when we set a trap or set off a rocket we mean we are about to move it to extreme and rapid action.

So you can see that depending on the context, set could take on two contradictory meanings.

Now if you were in mathematics, a mathematical set means a limited range a particular numbers that fit a certain function. If we're thinking about physical education, we might be talking about tennis in which you have a matches, a series of matches that fit into a set.

Or for that matter you could be talking about a sport like volleyball in which the person who prepares the ball to be hit over the net sets the ball and often that person is called the setter.

All of these different meanings - and that small three-letter word has many more than I've just said - all of them get their meaning by the context in which they are

used, and so context and comprehension go very closely and need to constantly be monitored in order to understand how students are progressing with the content of your curriculum.

And then finally one of the most important parts of the language and learning complex is that the students need to become comfortable not only with comprehending what they are reading and hearing from the teacher but also their ability to be able to express those ideas.

It's really important that students not just express ideas and concepts by rote learning, meaning memorizing what the teacher has said or what their textbooks says and repeating it verbatim back to you.

What they need to be able to do is to take words and important concepts and ideas and express them in their own words, in their own language, in their own way.

In this way they need to develop their own schema of understanding in order to give you an expression so that it's not simply a pattern of words that they've memorized but is something they truly deeply understand.

The difference is quite dramatic. Somebody who can for example recite a parts of the Koran might be able to do so, might be able to repeat long passages and not understand the language there speaking.

So one of the key important aspects of teaching with language is to help students to be able to not only comprehend the ideas they are taking in in a receptive mode but also be able to express those ideas in their own words.

There are many aspects of expression that can bring us to up points a really engaged creativity. This is a big part of good teaching and we will look much more closely at that in part 3 of this course, when we look at writing across the curriculum.

Now one of the things we need to be able to identify are the differences between spoken language and written language.

Speaking, as I've already mentioned, tends to come in forms that are different than the ways we use language when we're writing, especially when the writing is in more formal, that is in more cultural types of genres.

So I'd like you to take a few minutes now and have a discussion with somebody next to you about what you think the differences are between spoken and written language. How are spoken and written language different, and why are they different, what are the reasons that we use different forms in those different modalities?

We also want to know when are they different meaning. Meaning, in what ways are up spoken and written language the same, when do we use very similar kinds of language in speaking and writing. I've already provided in a previous part of this course the example of text messaging with the phone.

If you have a phone and it's capable of sending a message in text, very often that text message quite closely resembles the kinds expressions we use when speaking.

However, I've also mentioned that there are some key differences in texting. For example, texting often uses acronyms.

I gave the example of LOL, meaning laughing out loud, because there's no way in written language to adequately express the sound of somebody laughing.

Somebody might write H-A-H-A-H-A, hahaha but it doesn't necessarily get across the same energetic and emotive experience of hearing somebody laughing at something that's been said. So take a few moments now and speak with somebody, a partner, and think about how speaking and writing are different.

Once you've had a chance to discuss it, then I would like you to write down the various points that you discussed and note as you do it the difference between having the conversation about the differences between speaking and writing and then writing the notes of your conversation down on paper or a blackboard or what you have to write with. That will give you a living example of those differences.