

EDUC 172 – Introduction

Hello! This is an introduction to Language in the Curriculum, Education 172 created for the Dadaab Teacher Education Program.

My name is Dr. Kedrick James and I work for the Department of Language and Literacy Education in the Faculty of Education, at the University of British Columbia. This course is intended to help teachers to understand the challenges and opportunities that are afforded by working closely with students in their language acquisition and development. It points to the essential role that language plays in learning any kind of content in the curriculum and the role it plays across subjects. Therefore, this course is intended for and supposed to help teachers no matter what background they come to education with - whether from sciences or trades or mathematics or language arts or any of the above, we all have to teach with language.

It's quite simple to see that if we only had gesture available to us as a teaching method, learning would be much slower and much more difficult, especially when it comes to abstract concepts, those kinds of concepts that are most integral to the curriculum. So for all the secondary teachers who have subject matter as their core interest in teaching this course points out the vital role that learning language plays in being able to acquire the content you hope to deliver.

This course goes in six parts and this will be a brief course overview, so that you know what is coming up in the next sections of these videos. In our first section, we're going to have a general introduction to language and literacy. We'll talk about the different ways that language works and the different kinds of language we use to communicate. These are very important. All the different ways we use language inform us as individuals and those that we generally tend to master really help us to acquire curriculum materials much more quickly. So when looking at language will consider not only the different ways that we express ourselves but also the different contexts, the socio-cultural environments in which we engage with language, the different ways that language develop and changes over time. These are important changes because in many ways what we know of as genres and what we try to help students to acquire when we are giving them academic tasks such as, writing reports or essays, we expect them to have internalized knowledge of the forms and genres that that kind of writing happens in.

These kinds of forms and genres are acquired over time. They settle from patterns of conventional use. They settled from patterns a conventional use and it is only through acquiring knowledge of these conventions that one can become good at specific kinds of communication tasks by which we assess and evaluate our students. One of the primary ways in which students engage with language, of course, is through reading, and we'll first focus on this particular mode communication in our next section of the course.

Section 2 focuses on reading across all the content areas of curriculum and the kinds of ways we can assist students to deal with difficult vocabulary, with complex sentence

structure, with the differences between oral and written language, and the different kinds of sources they can turn to when searching for information to satisfy their curiosity or to achieve, you know, good grades and succeed in their scholarly work.

In the third part of the course we will be looking at writing across the curriculum. So instead of this time focusing on the receptive capacities language, which we will do in part two, this time we'll look at another side the expressive capacities of language and ways that we can help students to engage with greater freedom and creativity and bring more accuracy, detail, and excitement to the writing they produce in order to demonstrate the knowledge that they have acquired while engaging in the coursework.

As we move on then, we'll look at making sense with many different kinds of expression, so not just ones that engage print literacy but in all the others... movement and how we tell things through movement; and gesture, or with visuals, and we know, of course, the general shift in culture globally toward a more visual kind of learning environment, especially as new technologies takeover.

So we'll look at how different modalities can enhance a student's learning. This is because, of course, all students have different learning styles. Some of us acquire knowledge more easily when we hear it said to us, some of us need to see it to understand and believe it others of us find that a kinetic, a bodily understanding is the best way to acquire a depth knowledge and skill with things. There are many different kinds modalities and we'll discuss a number of these in part 4.

In part 5 of the course will be looking at the whole new world that is opened up to education through digital technology and different kinds of online environments. Of course, we are all becoming more and more inundated with a new digital technologies. Most of us have experienced cellular telephones and making those kinds of calls; and in many parts of the world now it is quite common for students to do a portion of their learning using computers and using the Internet.

These resources are rich but also varied in quality and require a kind of critical understanding when engaging with them in order to get the most out at those types of learning environments. So we'll look at some of those affordances and possibilities and also some of the dangers that we need to pay attention to as teachers when engaging with digital technologies and online environments.

In the last part of the course we'll take a look at different methods of assessment and evaluation of students language in language use, and the ways that we can help them to enhance their learning by a identifying problems they may be having with the language they use and how they use it, and the problems they may be having when they haven't totally internalized and understood differences between modes of communication.

So the difference between, say, the way we speak and the way we speak when we are writing in our heads, and the way you we actually do go about writing. Also of course how we evaluate in more contemporary contexts the work that students might do using

their kinetic literacies, that is their physical bodies, or using even video as a good mode of expression or using music as a mode of expression or all the different kinds of ways that we can communicate, all of which feed into a deeper and more powerful learning experience for the students, and we need to be able to understand how they are progressing in acquiring information in the curriculum no matter which modality it is.

So we'll take a look in Part 6 at the different modes and evaluation and assessment and how we can help our students by applying consistent assessment and evaluation across all of our teaching and help direct them, personally and individually, toward their learning goals. So that is Education 172, Language in the Curriculum, a brief overview. Next we'll start with an introduction to how language works.