

1. INTRODUCTION

The MLD curriculum is based on the findings of a comprehensive SFL Needs Assessment study carried out in 2002-2003 academic year as part of the SFL Curriculum Renewal Project. This needs assessment study undertook to identify the linguistic and non-linguistic needs of the METU students, both in pursuing their academic studies in their faculties and the professional demands after graduating. The needs elicited through

- (a) a comprehensive questionnaire administered to a representative group of students at freshman, sophomore and junior levels,
- (b) interviews and workshops with SFL instructors,
- (c) interviews with selected instructors representing the Faculties at METU, and
- (d) employers and employees at randomly selected state and private organizations were subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analyses to draw up and shape the finalized SFL Goals and Objectives towards the aim of building a meaningful coherence and differentiation between the syllabi of the two departments – School of Basic English and Modern Languages Department.

Building on this preliminary analysis, therefore, this MLD curriculum, prepared by the Curriculum Committee at the MLD, specifically reflects the needs of the students taking the MLD courses and aims to scaffold further syllabus, testing and teacher training activities/procedures by defining the course descriptions, specific goals and objectives and learning experiences for the MLD.

The Approach

The MLD curriculum assumes process-oriented and constructivist instructional experiences. Within this context, meaningful teaching-learning experiences that build on integration of four language skills contextualized in themes is the major principle towards the goals and objectives specified. In other words, language skills are to be integrated and purposefully treated towards the achievement of process learning, in which relevant skills and language are transferred across tasks. More explicitly, the instructional principle emergent in the MLD curriculum is that students build language competence through realistic or meaningful classroom tasks which reflect the ones they will encounter in their academic lives. Meaningful learning is expected to be achieved through a variety of relevant (relevant to their needs and interests) and coherent tasks and experiences that gradually build within specified purposes and contexts towards higher competence in autonomous/self-regulated learning and critical thinking skills and strategies. This relevance and coherence as the major organizing criteria in the development of this curriculum are embedded both in the overall curriculum and the specific courses offered at the MLD.

The goals of enhancing critical thinking and autonomous/self-regulated learning are assumed as overarching goals that shape processes and activities related to the four linguistic goals. In other terms, these two interrelated goals, along with the specific objectives subsumed under them (please refer to Appendix A for the specific objectives of each), are to be embedded into the teaching-learning processes related to the four linguistic goals.

The reason for this emphasis on autonomous learning is the assumption this curriculum undertakes that promoting students' independence or autonomy by equipping them with the tools, tactics, skills, and most importantly for motivation for learning to learn is supposed to enable them to orchestrate their own life-long learning act more effectively. Therefore, the nature of learning experiences or tasks envisaged in the MLD curriculum is expected to build this autonomy gradually through engaging students purposefully in their own interests and enquiries to do extensive reading, carry out research, and produce and revise own original piece of work.

Within this perspective, activating students' critical thinking skills would enable them to become active and autonomous learners as well as educated adults. The tasks involve higher order thinking skills; thus requiring students not only to perform at knowledge and comprehension levels but to evaluate information, ideas and judgments as well. The variety of texts and perspectives presented through pre-specified themes in and outside classroom would facilitate their critical thinking process.

The pre-specified themes will be treated in relation to students' local and personal interests, experiences and issues, through assigned tasks. Students are also expected to reflect this personal and local perspective in written and/or spoken products so that the tasks become relevant to their context. This relevance is expected to promote students' autonomous learning, critical thinking, motivation, and will eventually discourage students from plagiarizing.

* Please refer to Appendix B for definition of terms.

2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1: Express themselves in writing making use of grammatically, stylistically & socially appropriate discourse patterns in their professional & academic life

Affective Domain:

Plagiarism:

Objective 1: Recognize the importance of academic writing norms

Objective 2: Differentiate between ethical and non-ethical approaches to academic writing as regards plagiarism

Objective 3: Display conventions of citation in academic writing

Attitude to Learning:

Objective 1: Build awareness of writing as a thinking and learning process

Objective 2: Recognize the benefits of process writing approach

Objective 3: Be willing to initiate and maintain the writing process as a dynamic ongoing procedure leading to a desired final product

- Invite feedback from peers and the instructor
- Integrate external feedback with own perceptions and judgements

Objective 4: Develop an interest in writing about local and personal issues

Objective 5: Adopt an inquisitive and critical attitude toward universal, local and personal issues

Learner Autonomy:

Objective 1: Develop willingness to promote self-learning and self-study skills and strategies

Objective 2: Realize the need to read extensively and do research to answer questions and form opinions

Cognitive Domain:

Objective 1: Use correct, appropriate language structures, vocabulary & discourse markers

- Write simple, compound and complex sentences
- Use correct and appropriate punctuation symbols
- Use the tenses and modals correctly & appropriately
- Use correct subject-verb agreement
- Choose words appropriate to the topic & task at hand and use them correctly with their collocations
- Use appropriate signals and transitions

Objective 2: Learn, internalize, accept and carry out the stages in a process writing approach

- Brainstorm ideas about a given topic
- Narrow down a given topic
- Cluster related ideas-eliminate irrelevant ones
- Write a rough draft, get feedback and revise the draft
- Edit the final draft
- Create and develop voice

Objective 3: Identify parts of a paragraph or essay and practice writing them

- Write a topic sentence with a topic and a controlling idea
- Write major supporting sentences
- Write minor supporting sentences
- Distinguish between major & minor supports
- Maintain smooth transition between & within paragraphs.
- Develop components of an extended multi-paragraph essay
- Develop and practice skills needed to write longer texts.
 - A. Synthesize information from multiple sources
 - B. Learn the conventions of bibliographic citations

Objective 4 : Use appropriate formality levels

- Distinguish between formal and informal register and use them appropriately

Objective 5 : Learn to write in multiple functional genres as appropriate

- Write assignments requiring different curricular and professional genres

Objective 6: Use different discourse patterns for different purposes

- Recognize and use patterns of discourse organization in appropriate combinations as needed

Goal 2: Read authentic, non-fiction, field-specific material with relative ease at a fair rate of comprehension and respond to it.

Affective Domain:

Objective 1: Appreciate the importance of reading in developing one's critical thinking ability, research skills, language skills, vocabulary and writing

Cognitive Domain:

Objective 1: Understand the key ideas in a text

- Locate the main ideas of a text
- Infer the main ideas of the text
- Use comprehension strategies to draw appropriate meaning from the texts
- Learn the 3,000 most common words of English

Objective 2: Recognize the relationship between ideas in a text.

- Recognize patterns of discourse organization within texts and how patterns are combined in texts
- Analyze discourse organization patterns in texts and fill in graphic representations appropriately
- Recognize & interpret cohesive devices for linking different parts of a text.

- Recognize given and new information patterns in texts and foreground vs. background information.
- Distinguish between different levels of information (main idea, supporting idea and detail) in a text.
- Recognize signal words
- Recognize summarizing and concluding information
- Attend to headings and sub-headings

Objective 3: Recognize the attitude of the writer towards the issue in the text they read.

- Identify the purpose of the text and the intended audience.
- Note information about the source of the text and time of writing.
- Identify author's point of view, attitude, background and tone
- Assess how well the writer supports his argument.

Objective 4: Read extensively

- Read all assigned materials in courses
- Read additional materials required for projects and major academic tasks
- Learn how to find additional materials
- Read extended materials outside of class
- Read extended materials in class

Objective 5: Read with reasonable fluency

- Recognize quickly and accurately most words in a text (automaticity)
- Read easy texts at a rapid rate
- Develop a large recognition vocabulary
- Read unfamiliar texts at a moderate rate and with comprehension

Objective 6: Deduce the underlying meaning in the sentences or parts of a text

- Determine functional relations between parts of a text
- Determine functional purpose of each paragraph in a text
- Recognize definitions of words and concepts within sentences and within text segments
- Determine meaning of complex sentences

Objective 7: Evaluate, synthesize and use information from (multiple) texts

- Recognize fact vs. opinion
- Recognize arguments and the nature of evidence
- Recognize viewpoint of the author
- Recognize genre of text
- Determine whether the author is persuasive
- Compare complementary or conflicting information from multiple texts
- Synthesize information from multiple sources
- Use information from multiple sources appropriately for speaking and writing tasks
- Distinguish between more important and less important sources
- Add/Recognize worthwhile references in a text for further reading

Goal 3: Listen to and appropriately respond to spoken discourse in professional and academic contexts.

Affective Domain:

Objective 1: Develop effective strategies to understand extended lectures and other extended spoken input

- Generate appropriate questions to support comprehension before listening
- Maintain and adjust comprehension and attention throughout
- Develop note taking strategies
- Evaluate own predictions and generate further questions
- Recognize the need for further clarification and repair misunderstandings
- Be willing to share information/ideas from listening to further tasks/learning procedures

Objective 2: Increase exposure to spoken input in a variety of listening situations in line with their own needs and interests

Cognitive Domain

Objective 1: Identify main idea(s) in spoken discourse

- Identify key discourse / cohesive markers
- Identify discourse structure and organization
- Distinguish between facts & opinions
- Identify the topic
- Distinguish main ideas from supporting detail
- Identify key vocabulary items, synonyms, antonyms, etc.

Objective 2: Listen for a specific purpose to choose relevant information

- Identify broad roles and relationships of the participants (e.g. Superior / subordinate)
- Identify specific information from a spoken discourse on a range of topics and in a range of specific contexts
- Identify key vocabulary items
- Identify synonyms
- Identify paraphrasing

Objective 3: Evaluate information from listening

- Evaluate the adequacy of information provided
- Track the development of an argument
- Distinguish fact from opinion
- Distinguish fact from example
- Follow discourse structure

Objective 4: Recognize the tone & the attitude of the speaker

- Identify the purpose / genre of a spoken text
- Identify the speaker's attitude / emotional state and illocutionary forces in the verbal input.
- Be aware of paralinguistic features and body language in various forms of spoken discourse.
- Identify register
- Recognize the communicative function of stress / intonation pattern

Objective 5: Make inferences from a spoken text

- Understand meaning not explicitly stated
- Deduce meaning of unfamiliar words
- Use information from discourse to make reasonable predictions or draw conclusions
- Distinguish between denotations and connotations of words

Goal 4: Express themselves in spoken language with a reasonable degree of fluency and intelligibility appropriate to professional and non-professional contexts.

Affective Domain:

Objective 1: Develop an ethical awareness that will lead them to avoid plagiarism in preparing presentations

Objective 2: Build confidence in speaking

- Set realistic goals in connection with ultimate speaking competence

Objective 3: Be willing to initiate and participate in discussions

Cognitive Domain:

Objective 1: Initiate and maintain a conversation with colleagues in a professional or academic setting.

- Initiate and maintain conversation appropriate to the context
- Use appropriate contextual vocabulary (vocabulary appropriate to the register and genre of the interaction as well as the participants)

Objective 2: Speak with reasonable, accuracy, fluency, and intelligibility

- Speak with understandable pronunciation
- Speak with reasonably accurate grammar and appropriate vocabulary
- Use appropriate intonation and stress patterns and sentence rhythm with understandable and reasonable accuracy

Objective 3: Use conversational discourse routines effectively

Objective 4: Use appropriate spoken discourse patterns and markers in a variety of situations.

- Become aware of the differences between spoken and written discourse
- Speak with reasonably accurate grammar and appropriate vocabulary
- Use appropriate discourse patterns for organizing spoken interactions
 - A. use appropriate general genres
 - B. recognize how information is appropriately organized in
- Use appropriate register
 - A. professional formal and informal context
 - B. informal socializing
- Be aware of and use the delivery style and spoken discourse patterns appropriate in different cultures.

Objective 5: Use communication strategies effectively

- Emphasizing
- Hesitating
- Summarizing
- Paraphrasing
- Asking and answering questions
- Correcting oneself

Objective 6: Present effectively in formal meetings, seminars, conferences and in situations that require negotiation for professional purposes.

- Use appropriate functional genre and register
- Use appropriate spoken discourse patterns for oral presentations
- Make use of critical thinking skills during data gathering and organizing process

Goal 5: Become aware of professional ethical practices, social values, and international cultural understanding.

Objective 1: Be aware of professional ethics practices in the students' chosen field of study and be able to articulate these practices.

Objective 2: Practice social values that reflect the expectations of the METU Mission Statement.

Objective 3: Recognize the views and perspectives of academics and professionals from multiple cultures.

Objective 4: Work effectively with academic scholars and professionals from varying cultures.

Goal 6: Perform in professional and academic work settings that include group decision making and collaborative work.

Objective 1: Work effectively as a contributing team member with a group of academics or workplace professionals/colleagues

Objective 2: Take part in a group presentation of a professional or academic project

Goal 7: Incorporate appropriate technology applications and resources in English as part of workplace and professional literacy

Objective 1: Compile a portfolio of work related materials that demonstrate a reasonable command of English skills

Objective 2: Develop a personal web page in English that includes professional resource materials and projects, curriculum vitae, and a brief statement of professional interests and activities.

Objective 3: Present materials and research effectively in power point making appropriate use of English

3. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENG 101 and ENG 102

Both ENG 101 and 102 will be re-designed to become learner-centered, integrated skill-based courses that will develop students' skills in reading, writing, speaking and understanding English in an academic context. These two courses are to be re-designed on a continuum; but while ENG 101 will be designed to be mostly instructor directed, ENG 102 will place greater emphasis on student autonomy.

ENG 101

Within a thematic approach, reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills will be developed, with a language component in order to build on the foundation established at the Department of Basic English. In speaking and writing, students will be encouraged to use language forms that they learn through reading and listening.

Under broad themes (or threads), the students will be exposed to extensive reading both in and outside the classroom. They'll be encouraged to read a variety of texts such as short stories, academic articles, research reports, reviews and journalistic texts as well as chapters from textbooks.

Some suggested themes: Science, Art, Culture, Ethics, Media, Politics, World Issues etc.

As part of reading and comprehension, students will be encouraged to analyze texts and re-formulate information in graphic organizers. Students will also learn to interpret and transfer information from a visual representation (such as a graphic, diagram, or pie-chart) into written or spoken discourse.

Students will have acquired paragraph writing skills at the Department of Basic English. Hence, in ENG 101 they will proceed to write a personal essay and a response paper. (Note to syllabus committees: at the DBE students learn to write parts of an essay, but they stop short of writing full essays). Within the thematic approach, students will be encouraged to use the language structures and vocabulary learnt during the reading and speaking tasks in their writing assignments.

In the process writing approach adopted in this course, emphasis will be placed on unity/coherence, and the use of different discourse patterns for different purposes.

During reading, writing and speaking tasks, particular structures or language forms essential to the students' academic requirements will be taught. (These particular structures and language forms will be determined by the syllabus committees).

A thematic approach to promoting vocabulary development will be integrated in tasks designed to develop all four language skills. (Syllabus committees will prepare vocabulary lists for all courses, during the materials development process.) The words in those lists will be taught with their collocations in a meaningful context. Testing will be done by means of tasks and assignments requiring the use of target vocabulary.

ENG 101 will include class discussions, use of audio and video tapes (to stimulate listening and discussion), listening to lectures for note-taking, graded debates, critiques, and mini presentations to develop listening and speaking skills.

Aside from linguistic skills, ENG-101 will also explicitly reinforce non-linguistic skills such as study habits, critical thinking and learning strategies. It will promote an awareness of ethical issues and social values, as well as collaborative teamwork.

Avoiding plagiarism will be a priority (an emphasis on local topics and direct personal research wherever possible is an effective strategy towards this end). Cases of plagiarism will be severely penalized.

TESTING IMPLICATIONS

Continuous assessment of class work. Students will be responsible for the contents of extensive reading material to be assigned both in and out of the classroom.

After the treatment of each theme,

Quizzes

Graded discussions and debates

Graded personal essay and a response paper

will evaluate the skills and knowledge acquired through the activities under that theme.

Midterm and Final

Thematic discussion questions.

Students will read texts assigned during the course and given in the exam, to reply comprehension and discussion questions related to the themes covered in the course.

ENG 102

will be a continuation of ENG 101, with greater emphasis on student autonomy, research skills and synthesizing ability. All the activities and tasks in ENG 101 will continue within a thematic approach. In Eng-102, the ability to evaluate, analyze and synthesize information in both written and oral discourse will be highlighted. Documentation in writing will be introduced at the beginning of the course, in order to solidly establish the skill by the end. Students will learn the discourse patterns and structures to be used in different essay types.

Students will write two essays in ENG-102. 1. An academic essay with proper documentation. 2. A project report to be prepared throughout the session, including a literature review (displaying analysis/synthesis skills, and documentation), a definition/elaboration of a problem (using definition, description, cause/effect and comparison/contrast patterns) and suggestions for solution (including personal views and argumentation). Local and regional topics, personalizing the research and viewpoints will be recommended to prevent plagiarism. Instructors will have to keep in close contact with the students to guide them throughout the process.

In Eng 102, class discussions and extensive reading will provide content for writing activities, and continually reinforce language skills.

As in Eng 101, in ENG 102 all non linguistic skills mentioned earlier will be reinforced in discussions and written work.

TESTING IMPLICATIONS

Class work, quizzes, graded discussions and debates, a graded mini-presentation on the project report, an honest one-page written response to the course including self-evaluation of learning, a mid-term exam made up of a full response essay demonstrating synthesizing and documentation skills, and making use of texts read during the course and given during the exam.

The project report to be prepared throughout the term will replace the final exam.

Instructors of ENG 102 will assume the role of a guide/facilitator not only in the classroom but outside, through regular conferencing with students during office hours.

ENG 211

The main goal of ENG 211 is to enhance the students' competence and willingness to express themselves in an organized manner in academic contexts, and to interact with others confidently. It is important that students learn to conduct independent research and think critically on issues raised in the course.

ENG 211 will use an integrated, thematic approach with an emphasis on advanced oral communication and academic presentation skills, with language components such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Eng 211 will be inter-active; students will be encouraged to listen actively, respond to presentations, and participate in discussions. Speaking activities and academic presentations will ensue from reading and listening activities. Each theme will lead to the production of an oral and/or written activity.

Instructors of Eng.211 will assume the role of guide/facilitator not only in the classroom but also outside, through regular conferencing during office hours.

Students will start the term with a self-introductory presentation, participate in a guided group discussion, a graded seminar, a graded debate and prepare throughout the term for a Final Project Presentation. All the research, reading and listening activities performed during the treatment of a theme will be integrated with an oral or written activity. In this context, oral presentations and discussions will stimulate further discussion or response writing.

To promote active listening, students will perform tasks requiring evaluation of or response to presentations.

TESTING IMPLICATIONS

Even when themes (and/or original English texts) deal with universal issues, students will be required to choose topics that treat those issues in a regional, local, or personal context.

All class discussions, assignments and tasks will be evaluated as classwork.

There will be a written mid-term exam with three types of questions: 1. Open-ended, theme-based, 2. Skill-based. 3. Critical evaluation. (In order to test the students' ability to evaluate the tone/attitude, judgment/conclusions, justifications and ideas of a writer, students will be asked to respond to open ended questions on unfamiliar texts.)

The seminar presentation and the debate will be graded. And the final project presentation will replace the final exam. After the final project, students will submit a reflection/feed back sheet, as a written report.

APPENDIX A

AUTONOMOUS LEARNING

Students will acquire and continually use learning skills, habits and strategies that promote further independent learning.

Objective 1: Set learning goals

- Set long-term learning goals and plans towards professional development
- Set short-term learning goals and plans to accomplish course requirements
- Review task requirements
- Establish criteria for success
- Learn skills and strategies for goal success
- Adjust learning goals as necessary

Objective 2: Monitor progress in task success

- Monitor performance/weaknesses and strengths in accomplishing tasks
- Identify the strategy being used
- Identify weaknesses and strengths of the strategy in relation to the task demand
- Monitor own motivation levels

Objective 3: Identify skills that need improvement and develop appropriate strategies to improve identified weaknesses

- Choose the most effective repair strategies for a given task difficulty
- Shift across and integrate strategies

Objective 4: Review and evaluate strategies for task success

Objective 5: Give and receive feedback appropriately

- Be aware of a variety of feedback patterns and sources
- Ask for feedback from relevant sources
- Integrate feedback from different sources effectively to improve performance
- Give feedback that will benefit the others
- Recognize the effects of spoken & written feedback they are giving

Objective 6: Use a variety of information sources for a variety of tasks

- Identify the type and source of information required for task accomplishment
- Develop knowledge of the variety of information sources
- Ask for help from peers and teachers in reaching the relevant sources of information

Objective 7: Use strategies that will enhance communication and indirectly support learning

- Language Learning Strategies
- Language Use Strategies

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Students will use critical thinking skills to analyze, synthesize and evaluate information in English.

Objective 1: Distinguish explicitly the relations between main focus and peripheral information.

- Locate the main focus of an oral or written text.
- Infer the main focus of an oral or written text
- Note the function/relevance of peripheral information to the main focus of an oral or written text
- Identify relationship of ideas
- Identify the purposes for which visual information is used
- Identify the use of citation in written discourse and/or quotation in oral discourse.

Objective 2: Relate new information to previously acquired knowledge and ideas.

- Make associations with material that is already familiar
- Recognize interrelationships within the new material
- Compare and contrast the new information with what is already familiar
- Connect the new material with personal experience

Objective 3: Evaluate the validity and reliability of ideas and evidence

- Evaluate persuasiveness of support arguments and evidence
- Consider alternative interpretations of ideas and evidence in different contexts
- Consider counter-arguments to the ideas and develop refutation

Objective 4: Counteract conclusions and ideas presented

- Recognize contradictions and incomplete information
- Make distinctions, set priorities, restructure cognitive schemata.

MOTIVATION

Students will become motivated and active language learners.

Objective 1: Examine reasons for learning English and relate to learning needs

Objective 2: Become an autonomous learner

- Develop independent learning skills
- Engage actively in language learning tasks relevant to academic needs
- Read extensively in English
- Become interested in the language learning process

Objective 3: Contribute to language learning goals of classes and classmates

- Build collaborative learning relationships
- Build a positive attitude to learning English
- Promote cooperation and minimize competition in the classroom

Objective 4: Identify academic and personal interests and their connections to language learning

Objective 5: Become an active word collector and language user.