

THE DBE CURRICULUM

Rationale:

The rationale for the following goals and objectives of the DBE curriculum is that students build language competence through realistic classroom tasks which reflect the ones they will encounter in their 1st year courses. Therefore, meaningful learning gains importance through the teaching methods applied and the learning tasks employed. In other words, language skills are to be integrated and to be purposefully treated towards the achievement of process learning, in which relevant skills and knowledge are transferred across tasks.

This curriculum document assumes integrated skills, critical thinking skills, learner autonomy (strategies), motivation, an understanding of ethics and cultural diversity, and the use of current technology as integral components of the relevant teaching and learning processes to be employed at the DBE, METU

Implications Regarding the Implementation of the Curriculum at the DBE:

With the implementation of the new curriculum, the program at the Department of Basic English will consist of two stages: the foundation stage where the students are provided with the basic language and vocabulary required for them to practice the academic skills, and the integrated skills stage during which they will practice reading and listening for different purposes, note-taking, writing short texts as required by various departments and speaking, as will be expected of them during their first year courses. These academic skills will be practiced through meaningful academic content with the aim of creating a realistic purpose for learning. In other words, students will be using language to learn content rather than language itself. Grammar and vocabulary input will continue to be provided at this latter stage as a means to extract and/or create meaning.

Emphasis Placed on the Individual Goals during Implementation:

Goals 1-5 primary, goals 6-9 secondary and goals 10-11 tertiary

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

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 transition signals

Objective 2: Learn how to write a paragraph using the stages of the process approach.

A.

- Recognize, evaluate topic sentences & controlling ideas
- Recognize, evaluate & write supporting sentences
- Recognize underdeveloped (circular) arguments
- Recognize & achieve smooth transition between sentences & ideas

B.

- Generate ideas on a topic
- Organize ideas
- Set a focus
- Determine the discourse pattern in accordance with the audience and purpose
- Outline
- Recognize inappropriate form, function, style in writing and acting upon the feedback
- Edit the final draft

Objective 3: Learn how to write parts of the essay

A.

- Recognize & evaluate the elements of a well-written introductory paragraph
- Learn how to write a thesis statement
- Write body paragraphs
- Write a conclusion paragraph using an appropriate closure technique

B.

- Generate ideas on a topic
- Organize ideas
- Set a focus
- Determine the discourse pattern in accordance with the audience and purpose
- Outline
- Recognize inappropriate form, function, style in writing and acting upon the feedback
- Edit the final draft

Objective 4: Learn how to achieve cohesion in writing.

Objective 5: Learn how to achieve coherence in writing.

Objective 6: Learn how to use appropriate register in writing.

Objective 7: Learn to use the conventions of the different patterns of discourse organization in appropriate combinations as required.

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

Objective 1: Understand the key ideas in a text.

- Decode simple, compound and complex sentences
- Locate the main ideas of a text.
- Use comprehension strategies to draw appropriate meaning from the texts.
- Know at production level the 600 most frequent headwords and their derivatives in The Academic Word List: A Corpus-based Word List for Academic Purposes (Coxhead, A.)

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

- Recognize patterns of discourse organization within texts and how patterns are combined in texts.
- Transform visual information into graphic representations
- Recognize & interpret cohesive devices for linking different parts of a text
- Recognize given and new information patterns in texts
- Distinguish between different levels of information (main idea, supporting idea and detail) in a text
- Recognize signal words
- Recognize summarizing and concluding information

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
- Recognize words that signal author's point of view
- Recognize how well the writer supports his argument
- Identify the tone of the author

Objective 4: Read with reasonable fluency

- Recognize quickly and accurately most words in a text (automaticity)
- Read easy texts at a rapid rate (100 WPM)
- Develop a large recognition vocabulary (5,000 words)
- Read new information texts at a moderate rate and with comprehension (75 WPM and 70% comprehension)

Objective 5: Deduce the underlying meaning in the sentences or parts of a text.

- Determine implicitly stated functional relations between parts of a text
- Determine functional purpose of each paragraph in a text
- Recognize definitions for words and concepts within sentences and within text segments
- Make inferences; draw conclusions

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

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

- Identify the topic and purpose of a spoken text
- Identify discourse structure and organization (identify key discourse cohesive markers)
- Identify discourse structure and organization
- Distinguish between facts and opinions
- Identify the topic
- Distinguish main ideas from supporting detail
- Identify key vocabulary items, synonyms, antonyms etc.)
- Identify paraphrasing
- Develop effective strategies to understand extended spoken input
- Recognize the outline of the talk and the important information

Objective 2: Listen to conversations / dialogues with a purpose

- Listen for overall meaning/ gist
- Listen for specific information

Objective 3: Understand and carry out oral instructions

- Listen to and understand how to perform a certain task

Objective 4: Develop effective strategies to understand extended spoken input

- Recognize the outline of the talk and the important information
- Listen to input and take notes simultaneously
- Solicit assistance

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

Objective 1: Initiate and maintain a conversation appropriate to the context in an academic setting.

- Use conversational discourse routines effectively
- Use communicative strategies effectively

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

- 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: Build confidence in speaking in public.

Goal 5: Develop academic language skills through integrated-skills tasks

Objective 1: Use information from reading sources for a variety of speaking and writing tasks

- Summarize information
- Respond to written information
- Transform textual information into graphic information

Objective 2: Use information from listening sources for a variety of speaking and writing tasks

- Summarize a lecture
- Take notes
- Respond to a lecture verbally and in written mode
- Transform information into graphic representations

Objective 3: Compare and evaluate information from multiple sources.

- Determine the relative importance of different sources of information
- Identify and evaluate conflicting and contradictory information

Objective 4: Compare information from both listening and reading sources for a variety of speaking and writing tasks

Objective 5: Carry out tasks that require multiple language skills

Goal 6: Acquire and continually use learning skills, habits and strategies that promote further independent learning
(Objectives roughly reflect metacognitive goals)

Objective 1: Set long-term and short-term learning goals

Objective 2: Monitor progress in task success

- Monitor performance/weaknesses and strengths in accomplishing tasks
- Identify the used strategy
- Identify weaknesses and strengths of the used 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

- Ask for feedback from relevant sources
- Integrate feedback from different sources effectively to improve performance
- Give feedback that will benefit the others

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

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

Objective 8: Learn to use and integrate a wide range of learning strategies to achieve learning goals

1. Language Learning Strategies

A. Processing strategies

- Translating
- Summarizing
- Previewing
- Word analysis strategies
- Syntactic analysis (phrasal and clausal)

B. Vocabulary learning strategies

- Repetition
- Definitions
- Using a dictionary
- Semantic associations (key word)
- Imagery
- Guessing word meanings
- Using word-part knowledge

C. Memorizing strategies

- Chunking
- Repetition
- Rereading
- Linked association
- Imagery

D. Rehearsal strategies E. Repair strategies

2. Language Use Strategies

A. Communicative (production) strategies

- Avoidance strategies

Goal 7: Use critical thinking skills to analyze 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

- Distinguish between facts & opinion.
- Realize the flow of information from general to specific
- Identify the difference between abstract and concrete information
- Predict missing information
- Identify the purposes for which visual information is used
- Interpret statistical information
- Interpret graphic representations
- Determine the informational relation between a visual and the text

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

- Make associations with material that is already familiar
- Recognize interrelationships within the new material
- Identify the relevance of information
- Compare and contrast the new information with what is already familiar
- Identify the shift of focus among different concepts
- Identify different perspectives of argument
- Adapt new information to existing constructs
- Connect the new material with personal experience

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

- Identify tone and attitude
- Identify claims and forms of logical argumentation
- Locate the support(s) of the ideas
- 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

- Identify the contradictions among ideas.
- Identify the level of cohesiveness in a written or oral text
- Complete the information that lacks in the text and set a background for full comprehension.
- Make distinctions between valid & invalid information
- Set priorities among ideas in order to counteract

Goal 8: 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 and use independent learning skills
- Make use of teacher and peer feedback

Objective 3: Contribute to the language learning goals of the class and classmates

- Build cooperative and collaborative learning relationships

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

Objective 5: Use language to learn stimulating and challenging information

Objective 6: Become an active word collector and language user.

- Notice words and record them

Goal 9: Become aware of academic ethical practices, social values, and international cultural understanding.

Objective 1: Be aware of the ethical practices in the academic life.

Objective 2: Practice social values that reflect the expectations of the METU mission statement.

Goal 10: Perform in academic work settings that include group decision making and collaborative work.

Objective 1: Work effectively as a contributing team member with a group.

Objective 2: Take part in a group presentation of an academic project.

Goal 11: Incorporate appropriate technology applications and resources in English

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

Objective 2: Present materials effectively in power point making appropriate use of English