The Hong Kong
Institute of Education
香 港 教 育 學 院

Powering
Education
點亮教育原動力

Teaching with English as a Medium of Instruction

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Foreword

The Faculty of Education and Human Development aspires and strives to establish itself as a leading and preeminent centre for education-related teaching and research in the Asia-Pacific region. As enhancement of students' English standard has become a cornerstone for the internationalization of Hong Kong as well as one of HKIEd's key developmental goals, a number of corresponding initiatives are being put into motion at the institute. One of these is to increase the proportion of courses in which English is the medium of instruction. Although this booklet is primarily designed for staff, students will also find some practical advice on ways to improve what happens in our classrooms.

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Aims of the booklet

The greater emphasis on English as the medium of instruction (EMI) in HKIEd is part of a strategy to foster biliterate and trilingual students. This booklet is provided to support teaching courses with English as the medium of instruction. We hope that this will help make learning in EMI classes enjoyable, accessible and successful and ensure equity through providing accessible quality learning to all students despite their diverse language background.

Acknowledgements

General Principles

Functional Trilingualism

We hope that our students will have very strong command of their first language in academic and social domains, good command of their second language and developing competence in their third language (which is usually English).

Multilingualism is a good thing!

Research shows that the more languages you speak,
a. the easier it is for you learn more languages, and
b. you are more likely to have a wider range of cognitive skills.

Every subject has its own language

Every subject is expressed through language. This includes specialist terms and particular text-types. Subject teachers can induct students into the language of the subject.

Multilingual classrooms

Learning through a foreign language (such as English for many students) is more difficult than through the mother tongue. Careful, supportive use of familiar language in the classroom can help students to develop their competence in English.

Active learning

English is learnt most effectively in a social environment where the students use the language actively to express meaning and understanding. If the students are engaged, they are more likely to use English and to enjoy their learning.

KISS - to make English learnable

Keep It Short and Simple! Short in length; simple in text structure, vocabulary and logic. As a rule of thumb, limit new grammar to a maximum of two points per lesson, new vocabulary to nine new items and texts to 500 words if possible.

Go at the students' pace

Slow down, repeat and vary as many times as necessary.

Scaffolding

Support student learning with plenty of appropriately-pitched examples, collaborative learning activities, opportunities for practice in a safe environment, and assessment for learning. Think of ways to make learning "stick" in students' minds. Tolerate errors: practice does NOT make perfect—practice makes better!

Approaching EMI

01 Link your course learning objectives to language

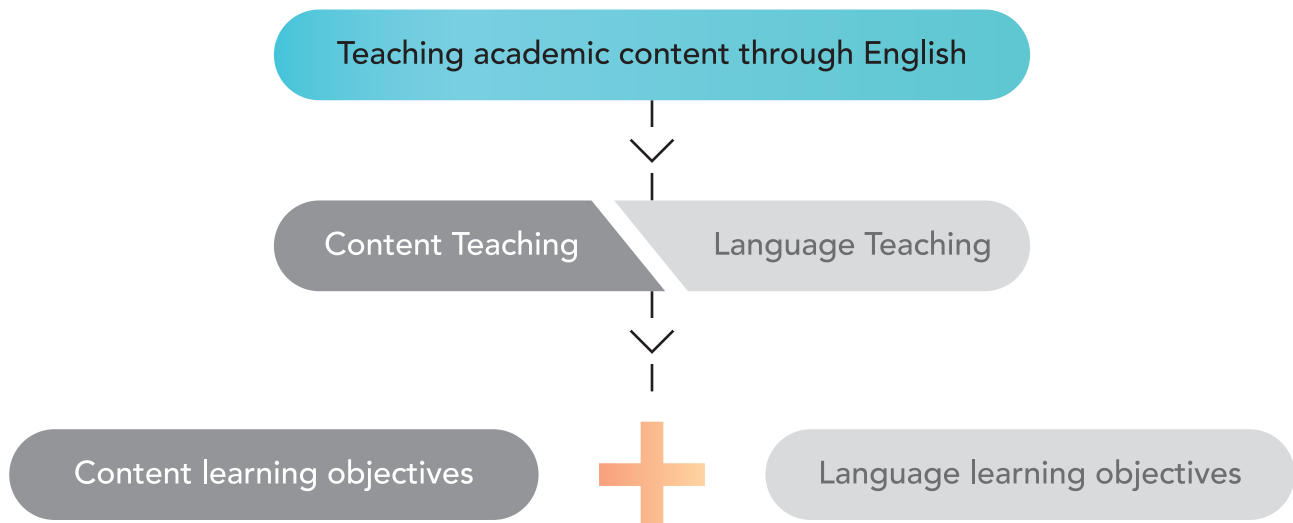**02** Present your learning objectives through appropriate text-types

03 Present the content with a focus on relevant language

04 Scaffold the students' active learning of the content and language

Stage 1 | Linking Learning Objectives to Language

Learning objectives of EMI courses address both content and language.

Teaching academic content through English

Content Teaching | Language Teaching

Content learning objectives **+** Language learning objectives

Stage 2 | Presenting Learning Objectives through Text-types

There are a range of academic and professional text-types, including:

Narrative	Describe a sequence of events.
Report	Describe the findings of a survey.
Description	Describe the characteristics of a new car.
Process	Describe the steps in making an omelette.
Business call	Call your client to raise and resolve an issue.
Reflection	Describe a series of lessons you taught and identify ways in which you can build on your pedagogical strengths and address your weaknesses.
Argument	Should young students be encouraged to attend tutorial classes?
Explanation	Explain the issues related to the controversies surrounding mainland tourists in Hong Kong.
Critical analysis	Analyse the pre-school voucher scheme in Hong Kong from the perspective of social equity.

CONTENT AND TEXT-TYPES

Text-types can link content objectives and language objectives.

For example:

CONTENT OBJECTIVES:

Students should be able to

1. demonstrate a critical understanding of teacher professionalism and ethical practice. **[TEXT-TYPE: CRITICAL ANALYSIS]**

2. compare models of collaborative relationships between school and community partners using research-based criteria, and suggest a suitable partnership model for Professional and Vocational Education. **[TEXT-TYPE: COMPARISON-AS-ARGUMENT]**

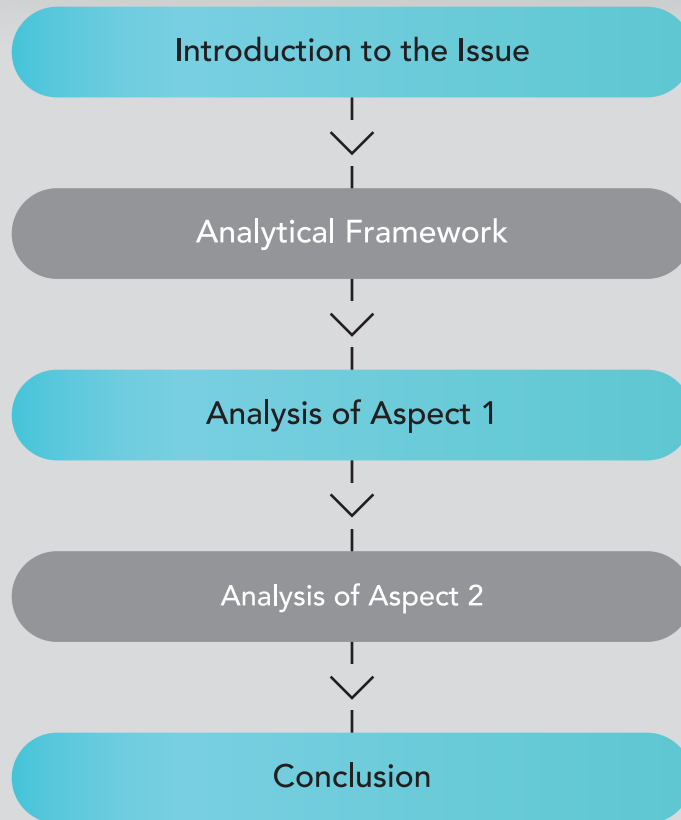## LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES:

Students should be able to

1. present a critical analysis clearly and logically using theoretical concepts and cases, and critique these in relation to the education in Hong Kong with appropriate use of technical terms and discourse markers

2. demonstrate the ability to make an evidence-based argument using devices such as cause-and-effect, logical reasoning and model-building, with correct use of tenses, pronouns and modals.

The assessment criteria would also be linked to the content objectives and language objectives. For the critical analysis, the criteria could read:
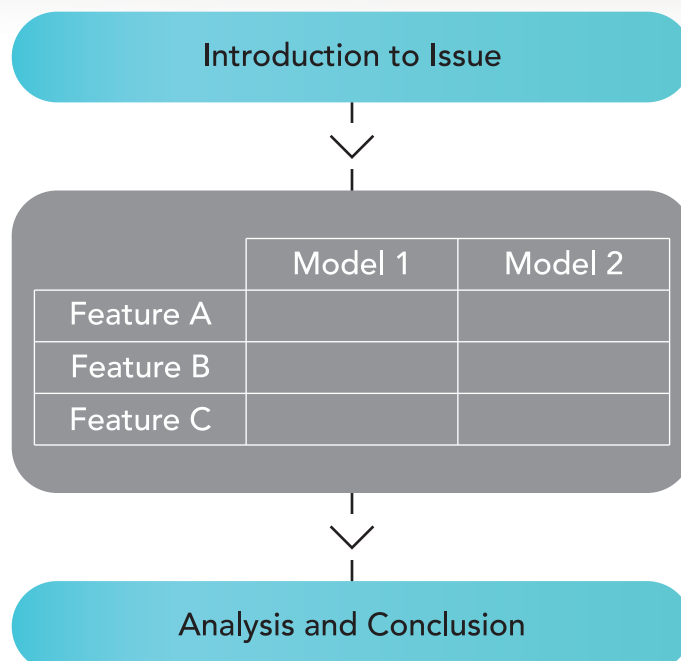
A. The critical analysis is very successful. It is logically organised using relevant theoretical concepts and cases. The critique is very persuasive and clearly communicated with appropriate use of technical terms and discourse markers.

B. The critical analysis is, in general, logically organised using relevant theoretical concepts and cases although there may be some weaknesses. The critique is quite persuasive and presented with appropriate use of technical terms and discourse markers, although there may be occasional problems in communicating ideas.

C. A critical analysis is presented, although there may be a lack of relevant theoretical concepts and cases, and the critique may be communicated at times without sufficient evidence, appropriate technical terms or discourse markers.

D. The analysis has a weak critical dimension. It may lack relevant theoretical concepts and evidence, and there may be regular communication breakdowns.

We can use shapes to show students how texts are organised.

TEXT-TYPE: CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Introduction to the Issue

∨

Analytical Framework

∨

Analysis of Aspect 1

∨

Analysis of Aspect 2

∨

Conclusion

TEXT-TYPE: COMPARISON-AS-ARGUMENT

Introduction to Issue

∨

	Model 1	Model 2
Feature A		
Feature B		
Feature C		

∨

Analysis and Conclusion
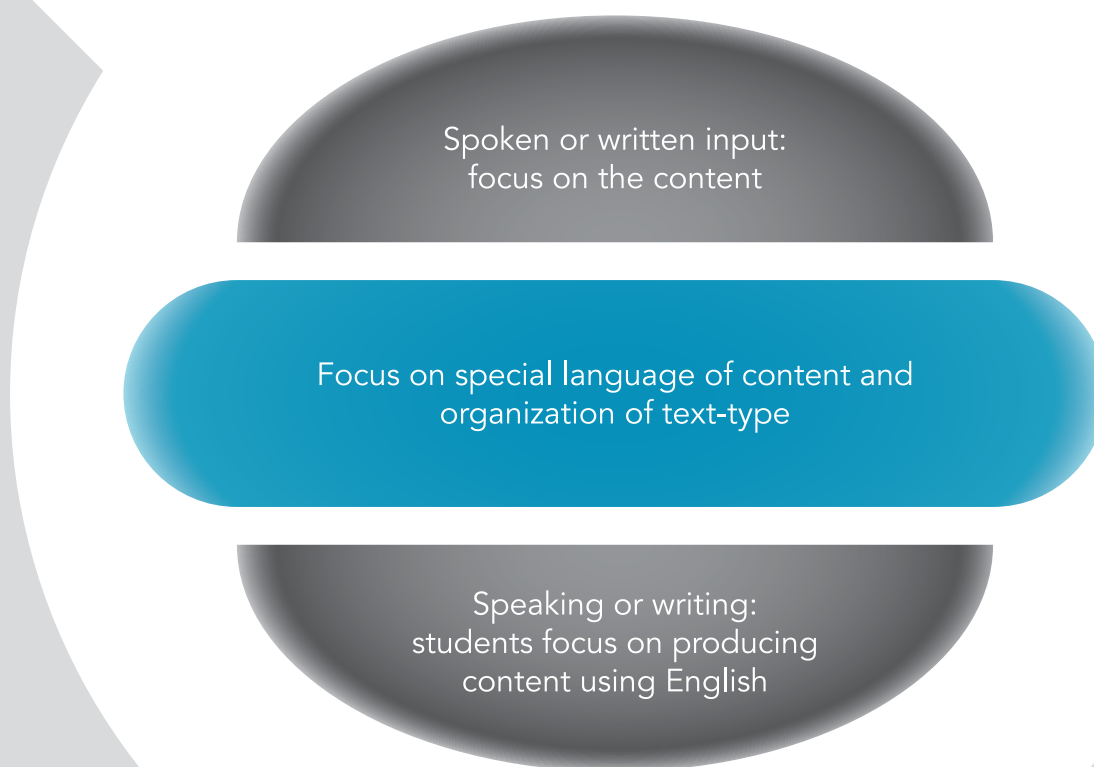
Stage 3 | Presenting Content with Focus on Language

The Hamburger Model is an input-output process that allows for a focus on content learning as well as relevant language learning.

Spoken or written input:
focus on the content

Focus on special language of content and
organization of text-type

Speaking or writing:
students focus on producing
content using English

For example, in an EMI lesson, the teacher demonstrates how to take a person's blood pressure using English. The comprehension activity focuses on the process (which is the text-type). The students' notes on the process help them to demonstrate their own ability in taking a person's blood pressure using English.

Activity 1 : Focus on Content

Students watch the teacher demonstrating and describing how to take blood pressure. As it is a process, the students complete notes in the form of Step 1, Step 2, etc.

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Activity 2 : Focus on Language

The teacher ensures that the students have the correct understanding of the text organization, grammar and vocabulary in English for describing the process of taking blood pressure using English.

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Activity 3 : Focus on Content

With scaffolding from the teacher, the students practise demonstrating and describing how to take blood pressure using English.

Listening: describing how to take a person's blood pressure

Special language: relevant medical equipment and actions, sequence (first, next, finally …)

Speaking: students take blood pressure and describe what they are doing

Here's another Hamburger Model for an EMI class on tourism. There are two text-types embedded in the lesson: carrying out a survey (the oral skills of interviewing) and reporting the survey results.

Reading: a survey of
tourism trends in the USA

Special language: relevant tourism terms,
interviewing skills, report writing

Students do a survey of tourism trends
in HK and write a report

Stage 4 | Scaffolding the students' active learning

- Strip down your teaching points to the essential concepts.

- Present your materials in English that is appropriate for the students' level.

- Design the students' activities for the input stage in a way that they become a model for the output stage.

- Include Chinese translations for technical terminology and abstract concepts. E.g.

  "Today we will learn about Matland's Ambiguity - Conflict Model of Policy Implementation (模糊-衝突理論模型). We will be able to explain the four policy implementation models using examples in Hong Kong, and discuss ways to facilitate each implementation process."

- Use a variety of materials to cater for different learning styles.

- Give clear instructions and models.

- Think about the "Velcro" Principle. How can we make the learning stick?

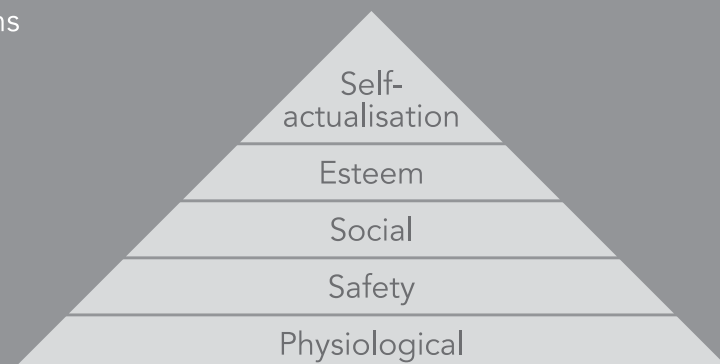## Making learning learnable! Make it stick in the mind!

Use memory tricks, such as acronyms:

SWOT (Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats)

KISS (Keep it short and simple)

FOIL (First, outer, inner, last): $(X+5)(X+6) = X^2 + 6X + 5X + 30$

Or diagrams

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            Self-
         actualisation
            Esteem
            Social
            Safety
          Physiological
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Or rhymes: Aviate-Navigate-Communicate

Classroom Activities

The first two activities are based on presenting the Matland's Ambiguity - Conflict Model.

JIGSAW READING

1. Students are divided into groups of four.

2. Each student in a group is randomly given a handout setting out the features of either administrative, political, experimental or symbolic implementation.

3. Students are given time to read.

4. Students with the same handout form a new group and discuss the content, using the language(s) of their choice, to verify and reinforce their understanding.

5. Teacher walks around to provide support.

6. Students go back to their original groups and present their assigned policy implementation type to their group mates for comparison and evaluation.

PROBLEM-SOLVING

7. The groups are given six texts presenting different cases of policy implementation.

8. The students hold a discussion to label each instance according to Matland's matrix and give justifications.

FISHBOWL

The fishbowl group sit in a circle with the teacher, who acts as a facilitator and language scaffolder. The teacher briefly introduces the topic and asks a question to set off a discussion among the fishbowl group. Unlike a conventional presentation, fishbowl students are encouraged to take turns, interrupt, ask questions, and elaborate on other's ideas on their own initiative. The teacher gives support for both content and language (e.g. rephrasing, guiding questions, teacher prompts, and language awareness-raising).

PRACTISE FIRST

Let students prepare what they will say in pairs or small groups first, then ask them to share it with the whole class. You can ask them to write a script to help them but encourage them to make eye-contact with the audience when presenting.

Some Tips on Teaching Language

TEACHING WRITING

- Show the students models of writing that are appropriate to their language ability.

- Make sure the models have a clear structure and layout that are appropriate to the text-type.

- Keep the texts manageable in length. A short text can be more effective than a long text.

- Design any comprehension activities so that they bring out the key messages of the text.

- Scaffold the students' writing. Give them time to plan their work. Let them draft their initial ideas. Encourage peer review before final submission.

- Give feedback on the contents and on the language, but do not correct every language mistake. Tolerate errors and give the students general advice on how to improve.

TEACHING VOCABULARY

1. Show the real thing.

2. Draw a picture, diagram or mindmap.

3. Act out or show a video clip.

4. Define, classify, describe, paraphrase, etc.

5. Translate.

Keep it in the family!

Teach vocabulary in groups of related terms.

Recycle and review often

It takes time for students to master new vocabulary.

Vocabulary file

Ask the students to keep an A4 file for vocab. They can insert pictures, diagrams, mindmaps, etc.

Please visit
http://www.ied.edu.hk/moi/index.php
for more resources