

Some Strategies for Teacher Explanations

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The following are some strategies to provide a signposted pathway in delivering a lesson. For general principles related to development and implementation of EMI courses, please see Adamson and Choi (2014), which is available for download on the website.

Review

E.g. Yesterday we talked about some of the differences between academic writing and informal writing.

Advance organizer

Today we will learn about hedging devices and how to quote someone else's ideas.

Referring to visual

If you look at the screen, you will see a list of hedging devices.

Sequence of time

Before we look at these words and phrases, I will explain what hedging devices are.

Defining

Hedging devices are words or phrases whose job is to make things less certain.

Paraphrasing

In other words, hedging devices make us sound cautious.

Explanation

The reason is that academics are very conservative.

Repetition

So hedging devices are words or phrases which make what we say less certain.

Giving examples

Some very common examples are "may," "appear" and "is believed to"

Providing visual input

(Write down the three noun groups on the blackboard)

Demonstrating

For example, if we say “This approach is effective because most participants’ self-rated proficiency increased,” it sounds too rash and too certain to scholars. So we change it to “This approach may have a positive effect.....”

Focusing on Language

Remember “may” is a modal, so you don’ t need to change “have” to “has.”

Results

Now the statement sounds more cautious and reliable, doesn’t it?

Concluding sentence to summarize ideas

That’s one example of how a hedging device softens the tone.

Getting students to repeat

Can anyone explain what hedging devices are and give an example of what they do?

Transitions

Ok we have briefly talked about hedging devices and their functions. We now move on to quotations.

References

Dr. Stapleton, Paul (2014, April). Strategies for teacher explanations in EMI classes. Presented at Mini Conference on Learning and Teaching, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong, China.

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