OBSTACLES

_the specificities of the academic discourse (underlying rhetorical structures, disciplinary orientation, particular delivery)

_less flexibility / less fluency in the L2 → fewer jokes, fewer asides, less questions to students, fewer gestures, decrease in the use of body language

_cultural dimension: socio-psychological features which come into effect when a lecture from one cultural background is presented to students from a different cultural background; local culture (use of examples); academic culture (cultural practices peculiar to educational institutions); disciplinary culture (specialised vocabulary, specific ways of presenting information)

_comprehension is affected when the lecturer doesn't use a standard accent and pronunciation

_comprehension failure when scientific written text is delivered as spoken text

_deviation from the lecture handout causes comprehension failure

_the 'negative cycle of expectations': the lecturer prepares detailed notes to assist the students in following their lectures → students have detailed notes so they do not listen carefully → students lose concentration, engage in non-lecture activities → the lecturer perceives the students' non-lecture activities and loss of concentration as a result of their weak linguistic skills and knowledge bases → lecturers prepare more detailed notes for next lecture

_the lecture theatre environment (noisy environment, dim lights, etc. → concentration levels fall)

RECOMMENDATIONS

_It is even more important to be well prepared when teaching in English.

_Less is more. Decide what the key areas in your presentation are and emphasise them.

_Don't translate a lecture you already have—think and prepare in English.

_Make a list of key terms / vocabulary.

_Put all new terms on powerpoint or in handouts (increased redundancy).

_Practise your lecture.

STRATEGIES

_allowing students enough time to take notes

_using humour

_using technology: students appreciate the use of technology but they find it difficult to follow the spoken text at the same time as attending to the visual artefact. Use powerpoint to structure your lecture, but keep the amount of text on a slide to a minimum.

_using plenty of examples

_giving students time to focus on the visual aids

_incorporating the lecture artefacts (handouts, etc.) into the lecture in a systematic way

_using accessible language

_using clear pedagogy

_using clear gestures / behaviour that can be easily interpreted and understood

_encouraging peer-to-peer support

_encouraging interaction, talking WITH the students about the content, not TO the students

→ buzz group discussions: the teacher stops talking and sets a question for the students to talk about with those sitting near them, after a few minutes, the teacher stops the discussion and asks for an answer

→ linking work done in tutorial classes closely with the lecture: the lecturer asks students to consider a problem in a tutorial then in the lecture asks for the known answers as a way for students to participate

_making use of the community of learners:

→ the lecturer must clearly state at the onset of a series of lectures the topics, the format, what will happen, what is expected of the students…

→ The students are given opportunities to tell the lecturer what their problems are in the lectures, how they would like the information to be presented…

→ catering to the students' preferred ways of learning

_fostering 'community-based' discourse (a discourse whose meaning is created by and for the collective or group)

→ more negotiation of the roles and expectations of each of the stakeholders in lectures

_inducting students into the community of practice:

→ provide practical examples in lectures about real-life practices

→ use rhetorical devices to include students in the community of practice (use 'we as biologists / researchers / neuroscientists')

→ invite practitioners to give talks

→ give first-year students a wider perspective on the courses they will take in their second and third year

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