ACADEMIC SKILLS IN ENGLISH
Summer School

SEMINARS

Masaryk University Language Centre
Monday 18th July to Friday 22nd July 2014
Brno

What is a seminar?

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Interaction

Your pedagogical role

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Your pedagogical role:

. Provider

. Scaffolder

. Problematizer

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What makes it different from a lecture or a workshop?

What is a seminar?

Interaction

Your pedagogical role:

. Provider – lecture/presentation

. Scaffolder – seminar discussion or debate

. Problematizer – Socratic seminar or workshop

Stakeholders – a role play

- Students
- Teachers
- Faculty or department heads

The role and purpose of a seminar in an academic programme

- Amplification/consolidation of a certain aspect of the degree programme

- Students may have an *experience* of learning and constructing knowledge through the seminar form

- Students become practised in using the discourses of their academic community

- Interactions and conversations pedagogically effective for developing positions and gaining critical thinking skills

Socratic tradition

*"Writing, Phaedrus, has this strange quality, and is
very like painting; for the creatures of painting stand
like living beings, but if one asks them a question, they
preserve a solemn silence. And so it is with written words"*

(Phaedrus 274c-275b)

- Importance of dialogue and speaking for the learning process and the development of knowledge.

- The tradition of Socrates also emphasises that students should have the *experience* of learning. This distinguishes – in Socratic terms – knowledge from belief.

Thinking as speaking; the socio-cultural tradition

"*Experience teaches us that thought does not express itself in words, but rather realizes itself in them*" (Vygotsky 1986, p.251).

Vygotsky's proposition that speaking is not an expression of thought but a *completion of thinking.*

Can you make a cake?

What have we experienced so far?

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- Ineffective opening question → narrowing the topic → pair-work discussion → plenary discussion

- Role-play → brainstorming (creativity) → plenary feedback → class discussion

- Pair-work cooperating (diagramming) → inferencing (metaphor) → plenary feedback → class discussion

What have we just done?

Other seminar styles?

▪Over to you!