

Negotiating Expectations: Experiences from Drop-In Sessions

Potential reasons for expectation gap

- (Very) different cultural and education systems
- General difficulties with English “output” skills
- Misunderstanding that translation tools and AI are sufficient substitutes for language competency



From my TESOL background

- Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): emphasis on communication
- Task based language learning: learning through doing
- ESP: general English → academic English → English for Specific Purposes (→ lexical ambiguity in Statistics (Kaplan et al., 2009))

Question types and corresponding approaches

- Some eager to learn, but unsure about what they've written ← difficulty ★★☆☆: use handheld whiteboards to break down what they've written so that they know what to check for themselves
- Don't know where to start ← difficulty ★★☆☆: use handheld whiteboards to break down the question, use another context to model structure, work on structure they can expand on themselves, leave and let them work on question before coming back
- Straight up asks me whether I can speak in Chinese ← difficulty ★★☆☆: depending on time, have a frank conversation about why I “can't” and why I shouldn't before taking time to work with them to make sure they understand both the concept and will come back after they've done some work themselves
- Students who don't show up ← difficulty ★★☆☆

References: Kaplan, J. J., Fisher, D. G., & Rogness, N. T. (2009). Lexical ambiguity in statistics: What do students know about the words association, average, confidence, random and spread?. *Journal of Statistics Education*, 17(3).