

# BRIDGE TO POSTGRADUATE: ENGLISH & ACADEMIC SKILLS

SKILLS TODAY, SUCCESS TOMORROW

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INSTRUCTOR  
MANUAL





# **Bridge to Postgraduate: English & Academic Skills**

**Skills Today, Success Tomorrow**

## **INSTRUCTOR MANUAL**

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## Introduction

Welcome to Bridge to Postgraduate: English & Academic Skills (Skills Today, Success Tomorrow) instructor manual.

This manual (it is a guide, as much as it is a manual) is your comprehensive guide to delivering Bridge to Postgraduate, a full-time, six-week academic preparation course designed for postgraduate students whose first language is not English. The program focuses on building academic, interpersonal, and language skills to support a successful transition into postgraduate-level study.

Each week of the course is structured around a central theme, ranging from foundational academic practices to creative problem-solving, research integrity, and collaborative communication. Students attend two 2.5-hour sessions each day, Monday to Friday, blending interactive learning, skills development, and practical application.

This manual contains fully scripted lesson plans, activity instructions, and printable materials. All activities are clearly explained and designed to be easy to follow, with teacher notes, examples, and answers provided wherever relevant.

The focus is on inclusive, student-centered learning that fosters confidence, critical thinking, and community. You are encouraged to adapt materials and timings to suit your teaching style and the needs of your learners, while maintaining the course's core structure and outcomes.

It is hoped this manual helps you create an engaging, motivating, and supportive environment for your students as they bridge the gap between their previous experiences and the academic demands ahead. This manual is here to support you, but your expertise and creativity in the classroom are what will make the experience effective (and memorable!) for your learners.

# Week 1: Building Bridges – Foundations for Success

## Day 1: Welcome & Setting the Foundations

### Morning Session (2.5 hours)

**Theme:** Establishing a Supportive Learning Environment

#### 1. Icebreaker: Name & One Interesting Fact (30 minutes)

- **Objective:** Help students feel comfortable and start building connections.
- **Instructions:**
  1. Teacher introduces themselves with a fun fact. Example: "My favorite food is mango sticky rice," or "I once climbed a mountain."
  2. Students take turns saying their name and one interesting fact about themselves. Encourage simple facts like favorite hobbies, travel experiences, or unusual skills.
  3. Teacher writes student names on the board as a memory aid.
  4. After all students have spoken, teacher randomly calls on students to recall a peer's name and fact.
- **Materials:** Whiteboard, markers

#### 2. Course Overview & Professional Discussion (30 minutes)

- **Objective:** Clarify course structure, goals, and expectations while acknowledging students' professional backgrounds.
- **Instructions:**
  1. Teacher presents a simple PowerPoint on the course schedule and objectives.
  2. Students discuss in pairs: "How does this course relate to your academic or professional goals?" and share answers.
  3. Whole-class discussion: "What skills are crucial for postgraduate success?" (Teacher lists key points from student responses on the board.)
  4. Teacher introduces a brief discussion on professional conduct in academia, linking it to corporate communication practices some students may be familiar with.

- Materials: PowerPoint slides, whiteboard, markers

### 3. Group Activity: Building a Paper Bridge (45 minutes)

- **Objective:** Encourage teamwork and introduce the "Building Bridges" theme.
- **Instructions:**
  1. Divide students into small groups (3-4 per group).
  2. Provide materials: paper, tape, straws.
  3. Challenge: Build the strongest bridge within 15 minutes.
  4. Example construction strategy: Fold the paper into strong columns or layers to increase stability.
  5. Each group presents their bridge and explains their strategy.
  6. Teacher connects activity to learning: "Like building this bridge, this course is about building academic and personal skills."
- Materials: Paper, tape, straws

### 4. Reflection & Mini Writing Task (45 minutes)

- **Objective:** Develop reflection skills and basic academic writing.
- **Instructions:**
  1. Teacher introduces academic linking words and writes key examples on the board:

Addition: furthermore, moreover, in addition

Contrast: however, on the other hand, whereas

Cause & Effect: therefore, as a result, consequently

Sequencing: first, then, next, finally
  2. Teacher models a short reflection paragraph on the board / screen, highlighting linking words: Example: "Today, I met new classmates and learned about teamwork. Moreover, I enjoyed the bridge-building activity because it helped me understand communication. As a result, I now see why collaboration is important. Finally, I look forward to improving my writing skills."

3. Students write 5-6 sentences about their experience in today's class, using at least two linking words.
  4. Peer sharing: Students exchange papers and underline linking words in their partner's writing.
  5. Teacher provides feedback by reviewing common errors and reinforcing proper use of linking words.
- Materials: Whiteboard, markers, student notebooks



## Week 1, Day 1: Afternoon Session (2.5 hours)

### Theme: Communication & Collaboration Skills

#### 1. Interactive Lecture: The Importance of Communication (30 minutes)

- **Objective:** Help students understand why effective communication is crucial in academic and professional settings.
- **Instructions:**
  1. Teacher presents key points using PowerPoint or writes them on the board.
  2. Students take brief notes during the lecture.
  3. Teacher pauses to ask questions and check comprehension.
  4. After the lecture, students discuss the key takeaways in pairs.
- **Mini-Lecture Script:**

*“Good communication is one of the most important skills for postgraduate students. In academic settings, you need to express your ideas clearly in writing and speaking. Poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, mistakes, and even academic failure.*

*Effective communication has three key components: clarity, active listening, and appropriate tone. Clarity means making sure your message is direct and structured. In academic writing, clarity is achieved through organization and proper use of vocabulary. In speaking, it means speaking at an appropriate speed and checking if the listener understands.”*

*Active listening is equally important. Many people hear but do not listen. In academic settings, listening carefully to lectures and discussions helps you engage more deeply with the material. A good listener also asks questions and confirms understanding.*

*Lastly, tone matters. In academic discussions, being respectful and professional is key, even when disagreeing. A strong argument does not mean an aggressive tone. Instead, focus on presenting evidence and logical reasoning.”*

Discussion Question: Can you think of a time when poor communication led to a misunderstanding? What happened, and how could it have been improved?

- **Materials:** PowerPoint slides, whiteboard, markers

## 2. Activity: The Listening Challenge (45 minutes)

- **Objective:** Improve students' listening and note-taking skills.
- **Instructions:**
  1. Teacher explains that students will listen to a short academic talk and take notes.
  2. Teacher reads a short passage twice. Students take notes during the second reading.
  3. Students compare notes in pairs and fill in any missing details.
  4. Teacher checks understanding by asking students to summarize the key points.
- **Listening Passage (Read by Teacher):** "In today's world, collaboration is essential for success. Whether in business, education, or research, working with others helps generate new ideas and solve problems efficiently. However, effective teamwork requires active participation, clear communication, and mutual respect. Team members should set common goals, listen to each other's ideas, and provide constructive feedback. Without these elements, teamwork can fail, leading to frustration and poor results."
- **Follow-up Questions:**
  1. *What are three elements of effective teamwork?*
  2. *Why is collaboration important?*
  3. *What happens if teamwork is ineffective?*
- **Materials:** Printed note-taking template (optional)

## 3. Role-Playing Scenarios (45 minutes)

**Objective:** Practice communication and collaboration skills in a variety of academic and professional scenarios.

Instructions:

1. Prepare the Students:
  - Explain that they will participate in role-playing scenarios, where they will take on specific roles and practice having a conversation in a given situation.

- Clarify that the aim is to practice using appropriate communication strategies like clarity, active listening, and respectful tone.
- Emphasize that the role plays are opportunities to make mistakes and learn from each other.

## 2. Divide into Pairs:

- Divide the class into pairs (students can work in pairs with one person playing the student role and the other playing the teacher, or one playing a colleague, etc.).
- Each pair will receive a scenario with specific roles and dialogue prompts.

## 3. Role-Playing Scenarios:

### Role-Playing Scenario Example:

#### Scenario 1: Discussing a Project Deadline (Academic Setting)

##### Roles:

- **Student A (Student):** You are a postgraduate student who is worried that your group project will not be finished on time.
- **Student B (Instructor or Peer):** You are a fellow student or professor who can offer advice on how to handle this situation.

##### Teacher Demonstration:

**Teacher's Role:** The teacher will act out both roles for the students, showing them how to approach the situation with appropriate academic communication. The teacher should do this as a conversation, not a lecture, to make it interactive and engaging.

##### Teacher Demonstrates:

##### Teacher (as Student A):

*(Looking concerned, speaking slowly)*

"Hi, I wanted to talk to you about our group project. I'm really worried that we won't be able to finish everything on time. We've only completed part of the research, and some of the group members haven't done their work. I'm not sure how to handle this."

*(Pauses to show concern)*

##### Teacher (as Student B):

*(Smiling, speaking calmly and offering support)*

"I understand your concern. Don't worry, it's a common issue in group work. The first thing I suggest is having a clear discussion with your group members. Maybe you could set a meeting to review the progress and assign the remaining tasks. That way, everyone knows what needs to be done and when. Have you thought about discussing the deadline with your professor to see if an extension is possible?"

**Teacher (as Student A):**

*(Nodding in understanding)*

"That makes sense. I'll organize a meeting with the group. But I'm a little nervous about bringing up the extension with the professor. Do you think I should just ask for more time?"

**Teacher (as Student B):**

"Yes, it's important to communicate openly with your professor if you feel the group can't meet the deadline. Just be honest about the situation. You can say something like, 'I'm really concerned about our project deadline. We've encountered some challenges, and I'd like to discuss whether an extension is possible.' Professors are usually understanding when students are proactive and communicate early."

**Teacher (as Student A):**

*(Looking relieved and speaking more confidently)*

"Thanks, that really helps. I feel better knowing there's a plan. I'll talk to the group and the professor today."

**Teacher Explanation (After Demonstrating the Role Play):**

- **Teacher:** "So, as you can see, in this role play, we used polite, clear communication. I made sure to express my concerns honestly and asked for advice, using phrases like, 'I'm worried that...' and 'I'm not sure how to handle this.'"
- "The other person, playing the role of the professor or peer, offered helpful advice, used reassuring language, and gave clear suggestions on how to proceed."
- "Notice how we both used linking words to connect our ideas: 'first,' 'then,' 'as a result,' and 'have you thought about...?' These helped us create a smooth flow in the conversation."
- "You can practice using similar phrases and linking words in your role play. It's important to communicate clearly and respectfully, especially in academic and professional settings."

**What the Teacher Should Highlight for the Students:**



- **Clear and respectful communication:** Students should learn how to express their concerns and ask for advice respectfully.
- **Use of linking words:** Highlight the use of linking words like "first," "then," "as a result," and "have you thought about...?" to make communication smoother.
- **Politeness and formality:** Even when discussing a sensitive issue, maintain a polite and professional tone, especially in academic settings.

### **Student Practice (After the Demonstration):**

- Now, the teacher will divide the students into pairs, give them the same scenario (or a new one), and allow them to practice the role-playing with the same structure.
- Students will be encouraged to use polite, respectful language, linking words, and to offer clear suggestions and feedback, just as demonstrated.

### **Scenario 2: Discussing an Issue in Class (Academic Setting)**

#### **Roles:**

- **Student A (The student):** You are a postgraduate student who has not understood a part of the lecture and is hesitant to ask questions in front of the class.
- **Student B (The professor or colleague):** You are a professor or a colleague, and you are offering assistance.

#### **Instructions:**

- **Student A:** Politely ask for clarification on the topic you didn't fully understand, using respectful language.
- **Student B:** Provide clear and helpful explanations while encouraging the student to ask further questions if needed.

#### **Example Dialogue:**

- **Student A:** "Excuse me, professor, I didn't quite understand the part about the research methodology. Could you explain it again?"
- **Student B:** "Of course! The research methodology involves three key stages: planning, data collection, and analysis. Which part of the methodology are you finding difficult?"
- **Student A:** "I'm having trouble understanding the data analysis section. Could you give an example?"

- Student B: “Sure! Let me explain with a simple example...”

Key Phrases/Linking Words to Use:

- Request for clarification: “Could you explain...?”, “I didn’t quite understand...”
- Offering assistance: “Of course!”, “Let me clarify...”
- Polite suggestions: “I recommend you review the chapter on...”, “You could try...”

Scenario 3: Providing Feedback on a Peer’s Presentation (Professional Setting)

Roles:

- Student A (The presenter): You are a student giving a short presentation on a topic.
- Student B (The colleague or supervisor): You are providing feedback on the presentation and offering constructive criticism.

Instructions:

- Student A: Deliver a brief (1-2 minute) presentation on a topic related to your studies (the teacher can assign topics, e.g., “An overview of a research project”).
- Student B: Provide feedback on the presentation, both positive and constructive. Offer suggestions for improvement.

Example Dialogue:

- Student A: “Today, I’ll be presenting my research on the impact of social media on language acquisition. My hypothesis is that...”
- Student B: “That’s an interesting topic! I really liked how you started with a clear hypothesis. However, I think you could improve the flow by connecting your points more smoothly. For example, you could use more transition phrases to guide your audience through each section.”

Key Phrases/Linking Words to Use:

- Offering feedback: “I liked how you...”, “It would be better if you...”
- Suggestions for improvement: “You could try...”, “It might be helpful to...”
- Acknowledging strengths: “One thing that stood out to me was...”

#### 4. Debrief and Discussion (10 minutes):

- After the role-plays, bring the class together for a brief debriefing session.

- Ask students to reflect on the scenarios: What communication strategies worked well? What could they improve?
- Discuss common issues or language mistakes observed during the role plays and reinforce correct academic phrases and tones.

#### **4. Reflection & Discussion** (30 minutes)

- **Objective:** Reinforce key takeaways from the day.
- **Instructions:**
  1. Teacher asks: "What did you learn today that you can use in your academic life?"
  2. Students share answers in small groups.
  3. Teacher summarizes key points on the board.
  4. Students write a structured paragraph reflecting on their communication skills.

#### **Writing Task:**

**Instructions:** Write a well-structured paragraph about an important communication experience you had. Include a clear topic sentence, supporting details, and a conclusion. Use appropriate academic linking words.

#### **Example:**

*One of the most important communication experiences I had was during a group project in my undergraduate degree. Initially, my team members and I had difficulty coordinating our work because we did not set clear deadlines. As a result, we missed an important submission date. To solve this issue, I suggested using a shared online document where everyone could update their progress. This strategy improved our teamwork and ensured we completed the project on time. From this experience, I learned that clear communication and organization are essential for successful collaboration.*

- **Materials:** Whiteboard, markers, student notebooks

#### **Day 1 Summary:**

Students engage in icebreakers, teamwork activities, and fundamental communication exercises to establish a supportive, interactive classroom environment. The day balances reflection, speaking, writing, and collaboration, setting a strong foundation for the course.

## **Week 1, Day 2: Developing Key Academic Skills & Effective Communication, Morning Session (2.5 hours)**

**Focus:** Focus on writing skills (structure, clarity), developing vocabulary, and practicing effective communication in both written and spoken formats.

**Theme:** How to structure, deliver, and engage in effective presentations while improving active listening and note-taking skills.

### **1. Introduction to Academic Writing Structure (30 minutes)**

**Objective:** To introduce students to the basic structure of an academic essay and its components (Introduction, Body, Conclusion).

#### **Teacher's Instructions:**

##### **1. Explain Academic Writing Structure (10 minutes):**

"In academic writing, there are three main parts: Introduction, Body, and Conclusion. The Introduction presents the topic and your main argument (thesis statement). The Body consists of paragraphs that develop your argument with evidence. The Conclusion summarizes the key points and restates the thesis."

##### **2. Provide Example Essay (15 minutes):**

Give students a printed or projected example of an essay on the topic "The Impact of Social Media on Language Learning" (see below).

#### **Example Essay: The Impact of Social Media on Language Learning**

Introduction: Social media has revolutionized the way we communicate, and it has also had a significant impact on language learning. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube expose learners to authentic language use, provide opportunities for real-time communication, and make language learning engaging and accessible. This essay explores how social media enhances language learning by offering learners access to real-world language contexts and by improving their writing and speaking skills.

Body Paragraph 1: One of the main advantages of social media is that it provides learners with exposure to authentic language. Unlike traditional classroom settings, where students might learn formal language, social media allows learners to encounter everyday language in context. For example, learners can read posts, watch videos, and interact with native speakers, thereby improving their vocabulary, slang, and colloquial expressions. Platforms like YouTube also offer language learners the chance to listen to podcasts, watch tutorials,



and follow channels dedicated to language learning, making it easier to understand natural speech patterns.

**Body Paragraph 2:** In addition to exposing learners to authentic language, social media platforms provide opportunities for practicing writing and speaking skills. On platforms like Twitter, learners are encouraged to express their thoughts and ideas concisely in 140 characters. This encourages clarity in writing. Social media also facilitates real-time communication through comments, chat messages, and voice notes, which can improve speaking fluency. For instance, learners can interact with others in English or another language, practice writing formal or informal messages, and engage in live conversations that reinforce their language skills.

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, social media offers language learners invaluable resources for improving their language skills. By providing access to authentic language, expanding vocabulary, and creating opportunities for writing and speaking practice, social media has become an essential tool for language learning. Therefore, learners should use social media not just as a source of entertainment but as a tool for educational growth and language development.

#### **Teacher's Instructions for the Example Essay:**

- **Introduction:** "Notice how the introduction provides background information about the topic and ends with a clear thesis statement that outlines the argument. This gives readers an overview of the essay's direction."
- **Body Paragraphs:** "Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence that introduces the point of the paragraph. The sentences that follow provide examples and explanations to support this point. Finally, the paragraph concludes by linking the argument back to the main thesis."
- **Conclusion:** "In the conclusion, the writer restates the thesis and summarizes the key points discussed. This helps wrap up the argument and reinforces the main message."

#### **2. Group Writing Activity: Analyzing the Structure of the Essay (45 minutes)**

**Objective:** To practice identifying the parts of an academic essay and organize thoughts into a similar structure.

#### **Teacher's Instructions:**

1. **Activity Setup (5 minutes):**

- Split students into small groups (3-4 students).
- Provide each group with a blank outline of the essay structure:
  - Introduction:
  - Body Paragraph 1 (Main Point + Evidence):
  - Body Paragraph 2 (Main Point + Evidence):
  - Conclusion:

2. Task (30 minutes):

- Ask students to analyze the provided essay and fill in the outline.
- Group Discussion: After completing the outline, groups will share their answers with the class, discussing how the writer structured the essay and the purpose of each section.

**3. Writing Practice: Drafting a Simple Essay** (45 minutes)

**Objective:** To practice writing a structured academic essay.

**Teacher's Instructions:**

1. Activity Setup (5 minutes):

- Assign students the topic: "The Impact of Online Learning on Education."
- Encourage them to write a short introduction, two body paragraphs, and a conclusion based on the structure they've just learned.

2. Writing Time (30 minutes):

- Students write their essays individually, focusing on clear structure and supporting arguments with examples.

3. Teacher's Support (10 minutes):

- Walk around the classroom to provide guidance as students write.
- Encourage students to check if they have clearly followed the essay structure.

## **Week 1, Day 2: Afternoon Session (2.5 hours)**

**Theme:** Effective Communication in Presentations & Active Listening

### **1. Interactive Lecture: Key Skills for Effective Presentations (30 minutes)**

**Objective:** To introduce students to the essential skills required for delivering effective presentations.

#### **Teacher's Instructions:**

##### **1. Introduce the Basics of Presentation Skills (10 minutes):**

- "To deliver an effective presentation, you must focus on three things: structure, clarity, and engagement."
- Structure: "Your presentation should have a clear introduction, main points, and a conclusion. Think of it as a mini essay."
- Clarity: "Your message should be clear. Avoid jargon, and make sure your slides are simple and easy to understand."
- Engagement: "You must engage your audience. This could be through asking questions, making eye contact, or using visuals."

##### **2. YouTube Presentation Example 1 (3 minutes):**

- Video Example: [TED Talk: How to Speak so that People Want to Listen – Julian Treasure](#)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEKEAFaV818>
- After watching, ask students:
  - "What key strategies did the speaker use to engage the audience?"
  - "How did the speaker structure their presentation?"

##### **3. YouTube Presentation Example 2 (5 minutes):**

- Video Example: [How to Present Your Ideas Effectively | Chris Anderson | TEDx](#)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y95t6iTWRY4>
- Discuss these points with students:
  - "What are the main tips for engaging the audience?"
  - "What role do visuals play in the presentation?"

## 2. Listening and Note-Taking Challenge (45 minutes)

**Objective:** To practice active listening and note-taking skills, then structure the notes into a mini-presentation.

### Teacher's Instructions:

#### 1. Pre-Listening Setup (5 minutes)

- Introduce the topic:  
*"We are going to watch a short TED Talk that explores how to improve communication skills. Your task is to listen carefully, take structured notes, and later use those notes to create a short summary."*
- Show this note-taking structure on the board before playing the video:
  - Main Idea: What is the speaker's key message?
  - Supporting Points: What evidence or examples does the speaker give?
  - Conclusion: What is the speaker's final message?

#### 2. Play the TED Talk (3 minutes)

- Recommended Short TED Talk:
  - **Title:** *"How to Speak So That People Want to Listen"* – Julian Treasure
  - **Duration:** 2:48 minutes
  - **Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEkEAFaV818>
  - **Topic:** This talk focuses on effective communication techniques and how to make people want to listen—an essential skill for academic and professional success.

#### 3. First Listening & Note-Taking (5 minutes)

- Play the TED Talk once without pausing.
- Students take notes using the structured format.
- Encourage students to focus on the main ideas, not writing every word.

#### 4. Second Listening & Refining Notes (5 minutes)

- Play the TED Talk again, instructing students to fill in any missing details in their notes.



- Pair-Share: Have students compare notes with a partner and add any important details they missed.

## **2. Note Structuring & Mini-Presentation (30 minutes)**

### **Teacher's Instructions:**

#### **1. Organizing Notes into a Summary (10 minutes)**

- **On the board, model a short spoken summary:**
  - *"Julian Treasure talks about how to improve communication by avoiding negative speech habits and using positive, engaging techniques. He gives examples like speaking with honesty and making your voice more varied to keep listeners interested. Finally, he reminds us that how we speak influences how people perceive us."*
- Students work individually to write their own 4-5 sentence summary of the TED Talk using their notes.

#### **2. Pair and Group Sharing (10 minutes)**

- Students share their summaries in pairs.
- Then, they form groups of four and choose one person's summary to present to the class.

#### **3. Class Presentations (10 minutes)**

- Each group selects one person to deliver a short spoken summary of the TED Talk.
- The teacher provides quick feedback on clarity, structure, and key ideas.

### **Wrap-up Discussion (5 minutes)**

- Ask students:
  - *"What strategies helped you take better notes?"*
  - *"How did organizing your notes help you summarize the talk?"*
  - *"How can you apply these skills to your academic studies?"*

## **3. Presentation Practice in Pairs (45 minutes)**

**Objective:** To practice delivering a short presentation and provide constructive feedback to peers.

**Teacher's Instructions:**

1. Activity Setup (5 minutes):
  - Pair students up.
  - Ask each student to deliver their 2-minute presentation from the earlier activity.
2. Presentation and Feedback (30 minutes):
  - After each presentation, the partner provides feedback on:
    - Clarity: How clear was the message?
    - Structure: Was the presentation easy to follow?
    - Engagement: Did the presenter keep the audience interested?
3. **Teacher's Role** (10 minutes):
  - Walk around to observe the pairs. Provide feedback and guidance as necessary.

**4. Reflection & Group Discussion** (30 minutes)

**Objective:** To reflect on the day's learning and discuss areas for improvement.

**Teacher's Instructions:**

1. Reflection (10 minutes):
  - Ask students to write down 3 things they learned about giving presentations today.
  - Encourage them to focus on skills or techniques they plan to use in their future presentations.
2. Group Discussion (20 minutes):
  - Allow students to share their reflections with the group.
  - Summarize the key takeaways from the session.

## **Week 1, Day 3: Understanding and Using Critical Thinking in Academic Communication, Morning Session (2.5 hours)**

**Theme:** Developing critical thinking skills and applying them to academic discussions, presentations, and writing.

### **Learning Objectives:**

By the end of the day, students will:

Understand what critical thinking is and why it is essential for academic success.

Learn to ask meaningful and analytical questions.

Evaluate sources for credibility and bias.

Practice structuring logical arguments in discussions and writing.

Engage in an interactive debate using critical thinking techniques.

### **1. Introduction to Critical Thinking (30 minutes)**

**Objective:** To define critical thinking and its importance in postgraduate studies.

#### **Teacher's Instructions:**

1. Begin with a question: "*What is critical thinking?*" (5 minutes)
  - Ask students to share their thoughts in pairs and then discuss them as a whole class.
  - Write their answers on the board.
2. Definition & Explanation: (10 minutes)
  - Explain: "Critical thinking means carefully analyzing information, questioning ideas, and making logical, well-supported conclusions."
  - Display this on the board:

Critical Thinking Involves:

- Asking *why* and *how*, not just *what*.
- Identifying bias in arguments.
- Evaluating evidence before accepting an idea.
- Forming logical arguments with clear reasoning.

3. Real-life example: (10 minutes)

- Show this example of poor vs. strong critical thinking:

✗ Weak Critical Thinking: "This article says social media is bad for students, so it must be true."

✓ Strong Critical Thinking: "Who wrote this article? What evidence do they provide? Are they biased? Are there other perspectives?"

- Activity: Have students come up with one critical thinking question about the example above.

## 2. Identifying Bias and Evaluating Sources (45 minutes)

**Objective:** Teach students to identify bias and reliable sources in academic research.

### Teacher's Instructions:

1. Show two short news articles:

#### Article 1: Reliable Source

Title: "Internet Has Encouraged Our Writing, Linguist Says"

Source: The Times

Summary: Canadian linguist Gretchen McCulloch argues that the internet has expanded our writing practices rather than diminishing them. Before the advent of social media, texting, and emails, many people ceased writing after formal education. Today, it's rare to go a day without writing, whether through texts or social media posts. McCulloch suggests that the internet fosters informal written communication, blurring the lines between spoken and written language, and encourages creativity through new forms like emojis. She refutes the notion that technology degrades language, highlighting instead its role in enriching writing practices.

#### Article 2: Less Reliable Source

Title: "Why Social Media is Ruining English"

Source: Random Blog

Summary: The author of this blog post expresses concern that social media platforms are negatively impacting the English language. They argue that the use of abbreviations, slang, and emojis on platforms like Twitter and Facebook is leading to a decline in proper grammar and vocabulary. The post suggests that this trend is especially problematic among younger



users, who may be developing poor writing habits. However, it's important to note that this perspective comes from an individual blog and may not be supported by extensive research.

2. Group Activity: (30 minutes)

- Split students into small groups. Each group has both articles in their books.
- Ask them to evaluate the reliability by discussing:
  - a) Who wrote it? (An expert, a journalist, or an unknown person?)
  - b) Is there evidence? (Are facts supported by research or just opinions?)
  - c) Is there bias? (Does the writer have a reason to convince you of something?)

3. Class Discussion: (10 minutes)

- Groups share their findings, explaining which article is more reliable and why.

**3. Asking the Right Questions: Socratic Questioning** (45 minutes)

**Objective:** Teach students to form deeper, analytical questions to improve discussions.

**Teacher's Instructions:**

1. Explain Socratic Questions: (10 minutes)

- Display and explain 6 types of questions:
  - 1. Clarification: *"What do you mean by that?"*
  - 2. Assumption testing: *"What are you assuming here?"*
  - 3. Evidence-based: *"What is the evidence for this?"*
  - 4. Alternative viewpoints: *"Are there other perspectives?"*
  - 5. Implications: *"What are the consequences?"*
  - 6. Summary questions: *"How can we summarize this?"*

2. Pair Work: (20 minutes)

- Give each pair a controversial statement (choose one per pair from this list):
  - "Technology is making students less intelligent."

- "All university degrees should be free."
  - "AI is better than human teachers."
  - "Exams are a poor measure of intelligence."
  - Each student must ask their partner 3 Socratic questions about the statement.
3. Whole Class Reflection: (15 minutes)
- Have students share their favorite questions with the class.

## Day 3: Afternoon Session - Using Critical Thinking in Argumentation and Debate (2.5 hours)

### 1. Interactive Lecture: Structuring Arguments (45 minutes)

**Objective:** Teach students to build strong, well-reasoned arguments in speaking and writing.

#### Teacher's Instructions:

1. Explain Argument Structure (15 minutes)
  - Write this structure on the board and explain each part with an example:
    - Claim: Your main point (e.g., *"Social media improves language learning."*)
    - Evidence: A fact, statistic, or expert opinion (e.g., *"Studies show students who use English on social media improve vocabulary faster."*)
    - Counter-argument: A possible opposing view (e.g., *"However, some people argue social media is full of incorrect language use."*)
2. Provide a Clear Example (10 minutes)
  - Display and explain this example on the board:
    - Claim: *"University students should be required to study a second language."*
    - Evidence: *"Research shows bilingualism improves cognitive abilities and job opportunities."*
    - Counter-argument: *"However, learning languages is time-consuming, and not all students are interested."*
3. Class Brainstorming Activity (20 minutes)
  - Divide students into small groups and assign them the statement:
    - *"AI will replace human teachers in the future."*
  - Each group must create:
    - A clear claim
    - At least two pieces of evidence

- A counter-argument
- Groups take turns presenting their arguments to the class.

## 2. Watching a Fun Debate Example & Discussion (30 minutes)

**Objective:** Show students an engaging and humorous debate to make the concept more approachable.

### Teacher's Instructions:

1. Play this short debate video:
  - *"Should Pineapple Be on Pizza?"*  
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4h3U2ISpHo>)
2. Class Discussion:
  - Ask students:
    - What arguments did each side make?
    - How did they support their points?
    - Were there any strong counter-arguments?
    - Did humor help make the debate more engaging?

## 3. Critical Thinking Debate (75 minutes)

**Objective:** Apply critical thinking to real debates in an interactive way.

### Teacher's Instructions:

1. Choose a Debate Topic (10 minutes)
  - Write the topic on the board:
    - *"Should students be allowed to use ChatGPT for academic writing?"*
  - Elicit quick opinions from students to gauge initial thoughts.
2. Divide Students and Assign Roles (10 minutes)
  - Assign half the class to the "Yes" side and the other half to the "No" side.

- Within each team, assign:
  - Lead speakers (who introduce the main points).
  - Supporters (who provide additional evidence).
  - Rebuttal speakers (who counter the opposing team).
- 3. Preparation Time (15 minutes):
  - Each team discusses and writes:
    - Three main points to support their argument.
    - One counter-argument to anticipate the other side's response.
    - Examples or data to strengthen their case.
- 4. Debate (30 minutes):
  - Opening statements: Each side presents its three main arguments.
  - Rebuttals: Each team gets a chance to challenge the other's argument.
  - Final Summary: Each team has one minute to summarize their position.
- 5. Wrap-up Discussion & Reflection (10 minutes):
  - Class discussion: Ask students:
    - What was the most persuasive argument?
    - Did anyone change their opinion? Why or why not?
  - Writing Task: Have students write a short reflection on the debate, stating which side they personally agree with and why.

## **Week 1, Day 4: Communication in Action – Effective Collaboration and Networking, Morning Session (2.5 hours)**

**Objective:** Develop key networking skills to help students build professional relationships in an academic or corporate context, while focusing on effective introductions, small talk, and follow-up strategies.

### **1. Warm-Up Activity: Networking Bingo (20 minutes)**

**Objective:** Energize students, introduce the concept of networking, and get them talking to each other in a fun way.

#### **Teacher's Instructions:**

- **Preparation:** Create a simple Networking Bingo card with categories like:
  - "Has presented at a conference"
  - "Speaks more than two languages"
  - "Has worked in marketing"
  - "Knows how to use LinkedIn"
  - "Is interested in climate change research"
  - Has studied abroad for more than 6 months
  - Has presented a paper at a conference
  - Speaks three or more languages
  - Has worked in a multinational company
  - Has published an article or research paper
  - Is interested in artificial intelligence or robotics
  - Has taken an online course in the last year
  - Has used virtual reality for learning or research
  - Is currently learning a new skill (e.g., coding, public speaking)
  - Has experience in marketing or branding
  - Has attended a TEDx event
  - Has collaborated on a research project with someone from another country

- Has worked in a leadership role (e.g., manager, team lead)
- Is interested in sustainability or environmental issues
- Is a member of a professional organization (e.g., academic society, industry)
- **Instructions:** Distribute the Bingo cards and give students 15 minutes to network and ask each other questions that would help them fill out their cards.
  - Example Question: “Do you speak more than one language?”
  - When students find someone who fits a square, they mark it off and move on to ask another student. The first student to complete a row of Bingo wins!
- **Teacher Tip:** Walk around and encourage students to ask each other open-ended questions. This gets them into the habit of engaging in small talk.

## **2. Introduction to Networking Skills (15 minutes)**

**Objective:** Teach students the basic networking skills of introducing themselves, starting small talk, and following up after a conversation.

### **Teacher’s Instructions:**

- Explain the three key networking skills:
  - Introductions: How to introduce yourself clearly and confidently.
  - Small Talk: How to start and maintain a conversation.
  - Follow-up: How to stay connected after the conversation.
- Teacher Example:
  - Introductions: “Hi, my name is [Teacher’s Name], and I’m a professor of [subject]. How about you?”
  - Small Talk: “So, what’s your research about?”
  - Follow-up: “It was great talking to you, I’ll send you a LinkedIn request so we can stay in touch.”
- Model a short networking interaction with a student to demonstrate how it works.
- **Model Networking Interaction (Teacher and Student)**
- **Step 1: Introduction**



- Teacher: "Hi, my name is [Teacher's Name]. I'm a professor here, and I specialize in academic writing. How about you?"
- Student: "Hi, I'm [Student's Name]. I'm currently studying business administration."
- Teacher: "That's great! Business is such a broad field. What area of business are you most interested in?"
- **Step 2: Small Talk**
- Teacher: "It must be exciting to be in your program. Have you had any interesting projects or courses so far?"
- Student: "Yes, I really enjoyed a project on international marketing, and I'm also looking forward to learning more about leadership strategies."
- Teacher: "Sounds interesting! International marketing is such a dynamic field. What's the most important thing you learned from that project?"
- **Step 3: Follow-Up Question**
- Teacher: "I imagine working on international marketing means you get to study various global trends. Do you see any significant changes happening in that area right now?"
- Student: "Yes, actually. There's a lot of focus on digital marketing and using social media to reach international audiences."
- Teacher: "I completely agree. The rise of digital platforms has transformed marketing strategies worldwide. Do you use social media for your own research or projects?"
- **Step 4: Closing the Conversation (Follow-up)**
- Teacher: "It's been great talking to you, [Student's Name]. I'd love to stay connected. Would you be open to connecting on LinkedIn so we can continue sharing ideas?"
- Student: "Sure, I'd love that!"
- Teacher: "Great! I'll send you an invite later. It was a pleasure chatting with you!"
- **Key Takeaways from the Model Interaction:**
- Introductions: The teacher and student exchanged basic information (names, profession, area of interest).
- Small Talk: The teacher asked open-ended questions to keep the conversation going and learn more about the student's interests.

- **Follow-up Questions:** The teacher asked questions that prompted the student to share more about their projects and ideas, fostering deeper conversation.
- **Closing:** The teacher wrapped up the conversation by suggesting a professional follow-up, like connecting on LinkedIn, to keep the relationship going.
- **Teacher Tip:**
- As you model this interaction, highlight the importance of asking open-ended questions. These allow the other person to share more about their interests, experiences, and ideas, which is key to making meaningful connections.

### **3. Key Networking Skills Practice (20 minutes)**

**Objective:** Allow students to practice networking skills in pairs.

**Teacher's Instructions:**

- **Instructions for Pair Work:**
  - Pair students up and have them practice introducing themselves using the structure provided earlier. After 3 minutes, have them switch roles.
  - Then, ask them to start small talk with open-ended questions.
  - Encourage them to ask questions like:
    - “What inspired you to study this field?”
    - “What’s the most interesting thing you’ve learned in your research?”
  - After 5 minutes, ask students to give each other feedback: Was it easy to introduce yourself? Was the conversation engaging?

### **4. Role-Playing Scenarios (30 minutes)**

**Objective:** Practice networking in a realistic setting using role-play scenarios.

**Teacher's Instructions:**

- **Preparation:** Have 3-4 pre-prepared networking scenarios based on academic or professional settings. Examples:
  - **Scenario 1:** You’re at a conference and meet someone who works in a field you’re interested in.

- Scenario 2: You're at a university event and meet a professor from another department.
- Scenario 3: You're at a company mixer and meet someone who could help you with your career goals.
- **Instructions:**
  - Have students work in pairs and role-play the scenarios.
  - In each scenario, students will introduce themselves, engage in small talk, and practice a follow-up question to keep the conversation going. After 10 minutes, have students switch roles.
- **Example Scenario:**
  - Scenario: "You're at a research conference and meet a professor from another university. You introduce yourself and begin small talk."
  - Teacher: *"You're at a research conference and meet Dr. Smith, a professor who specializes in climate change research. What would you say to introduce yourself?"*

## 5. Fun Debate Preparation (30 minutes)

**Objective:** Engage students in critical thinking by preparing them for a fun, low-stakes debate that uses the networking skills they've learned.

### Teacher's Instructions:

- Explain the Topic: "Let's have a friendly debate about the topic: 'Should students be required to network at academic conferences?'"
- **Instructions:**
  1. Divide students into two groups:
    - Group 1: "Yes, students should be required to network."
    - Group 2: "No, students should not be required to network."
  2. Give students 10 minutes to prepare their argument by coming up with 3 points in favor of their position and one counter-argument to anticipate the other side.
  3. Prepare Arguments:

- Group 1 might say: "Networking provides valuable connections for future research projects."
- Group 2 might counter: "Networking can feel forced and may lead to superficial connections."
- Mini Debate: After 10 minutes of preparation, allow each group 5 minutes to present their arguments.

## **6. Group Reflection and Follow-Up Discussion (15 minutes)**

**Objective:** Reflect on the networking skills learned today and how they can be applied in academic and professional settings.

### **Teacher's Instructions:**

- Group Reflection: Ask students to share one key takeaway from today's session.
  - "What is one thing you learned today that you'll use in your future academic or professional networking?"
- Follow-Up Discussion:
  - Ask students to discuss how they can continue practicing networking. Encourage them to think about networking opportunities on LinkedIn or at upcoming events.

## **Summary and Wrap-Up (10 minutes)**

**Objective:** Conclude the session and ensure students feel prepared to apply what they've learned.

### **Teacher's Instructions:**

- Summarize the Key Points:
  - Introductions, Small Talk, and Follow-up.
  - Emphasize that networking is about building genuine relationships.
- Encourage Students to Continue Networking:
  - "Remember, networking is a skill you can practice at any event or even online. Keep practicing with your peers and professors."

- End with a Fun Networking Icebreaker:
  - Have students pair up one last time and share their favorite academic experience or research project. This is a final chance to network in a relaxed way.

## **Week 1 – Day 4 Afternoon Session (2.5 hours)**

**Focus:** This session will focus on effective communication in academic presentations and public speaking.

### **4. Interactive Lecture: Communicating Your Research (30 minutes)**

**Objective:** To help students learn how to present their academic ideas effectively and clearly.

#### **Teacher's Instructions:**

1. Introduction to Academic Presentations (10 minutes):
  - Explain the importance of clear and engaging communication in academic contexts, such as presenting research findings or participating in academic discussions.
  - Introduce key elements of a strong academic presentation:
    - Clear structure (Introduction, Body, Conclusion)
    - Visual aids (e.g., slides)
    - Engaging delivery (eye contact, tone)
2. Example of a Presentation Structure (5 minutes):
  - Provide an example structure for an academic presentation:
    - Introduction: What is your research topic, and why is it important?
    - Body: Key findings or arguments, with supporting evidence.
    - Conclusion: Summary of the main points and the significance of the research.

### **Example of a Short Presentation: "The Impact of Social Media on Language Learning"**

#### **Slide 1: Title Slide**

- **Title:** The Impact of Social Media on Language Learning
- **Presenter:** [Teacher's Name]
- **Date:** [Presentation Date]

#### **Slide 2: Introduction**

**Text on Slide:**

- Social media has become a major tool in everyday communication.
- But how does it impact language learning?

**Verbal Introduction:**

"Hello everyone. Today, I'll be talking about the impact of social media on language learning. Social media is not just for connecting with friends anymore – it has become an essential tool in education and language acquisition. Let's explore how platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter can help us learn new languages, and how they might also present some challenges."

**Slide 3: Benefits of Social Media for Language Learning****Text on Slide:**

- Exposure to Native Speakers
- Access to Real-Life Content
- Encourages Interactive Learning

**Verbal Explanation:**

"One of the major benefits of using social media for language learning is the exposure to native speakers. Platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok provide videos and content in different languages, helping learners hear real-life conversations. Additionally, social media gives us access to real-life content, such as articles, blogs, and news in the target language, allowing us to learn vocabulary and context in a way that's much more engaging. Social media also encourages interactive learning, where you can communicate directly with others through comments, messages, or live chats."

**Slide 4: Challenges of Social Media for Language Learning****Text on Slide:**

- Informal Language Use
- Distractions and Time Management
- Over-reliance on Technology

**Verbal Explanation:**

"However, there are also some challenges. First, social media often uses informal language, slang, and abbreviations, which may not be suitable for academic or formal writing. Second, while social media is an engaging tool, it can also be a major source of distractions. It's easy



to spend hours scrolling through posts rather than focusing on learning. Lastly, relying too heavily on social media for learning might cause students to neglect traditional learning methods, such as reading books or engaging in face-to-face conversations."

### **Slide 5: Conclusion**

#### **Text on Slide:**

- Social media is a powerful tool for language learning.
- Use it wisely to maximize benefits and minimize distractions.

#### **Verbal Conclusion:**

"In conclusion, social media is a powerful tool for language learning, offering access to authentic content and opportunities for interactive practice. However, it's important to use social media wisely. Like any tool, it should complement traditional learning methods rather than replace them. By balancing social media use with other educational strategies, we can enhance our language skills effectively."

### **Slide 6: Questions and Discussion**

#### **Text on Slide:**

- Any Questions?
- Let's discuss!

#### **Verbal Invitation for Discussion:**

"Now, I'd love to hear your thoughts. Do you use social media for language learning? What platforms do you find most helpful, and how do you manage the potential distractions?"

#### **Key Points in the Presentation:**

1. Clear Structure: The presentation follows a clear structure: introduction, main body with benefits and challenges, conclusion, and a Q&A section.
2. Engaging Content: The topic is relevant and interesting to postgraduate students, focusing on a modern and widely used tool in learning.
3. Visual Aids: Each slide contains key points to help reinforce the speaker's message, with minimal text to keep the focus on the presentation.
4. Interactive Ending: The presentation ends with an invitation for the audience to share their thoughts, encouraging participation and engagement.

#### **Teacher Tip:**