

## Seminar Signposting Language

Time: 60+ minutes

Level: \*\*\*\* [B1/B2/C1]

### Lesson Plan

Aim: to develop the students' awareness and ability to use signposting phrases in seminars.

#### 1. Preparation: Print off the following documents:

1. Seminar Phrases #1 for each student.
2. Student Seminar Playing Cards #2 for each student.

**IMPORTANT:** students work in small groups (4-6), therefore each student in each group must have a different colour set of cards.

If you only have a black & white printer, print the first set of white cards and use different colour pens to create each set.

Giving an opinion	Stating facts	Interrupting	Giving an opinion	Stating facts	Interrupting
Checking understanding	Proposing a solution	Demonstrating understanding	Checking understanding	Proposing a solution	Demonstrating understanding
Focus on difficulties	Disagreeing	Seeing both sides	Focus on difficulties	Disagreeing	Seeing both sides
Pinpointing a problem	Adding information	Demonstrating understanding	Pinpointing a problem	Adding information	Demonstrating understanding

3. 1 set of Seminar Speaking Cards #3

#### 2. Seminar Phrase sheet

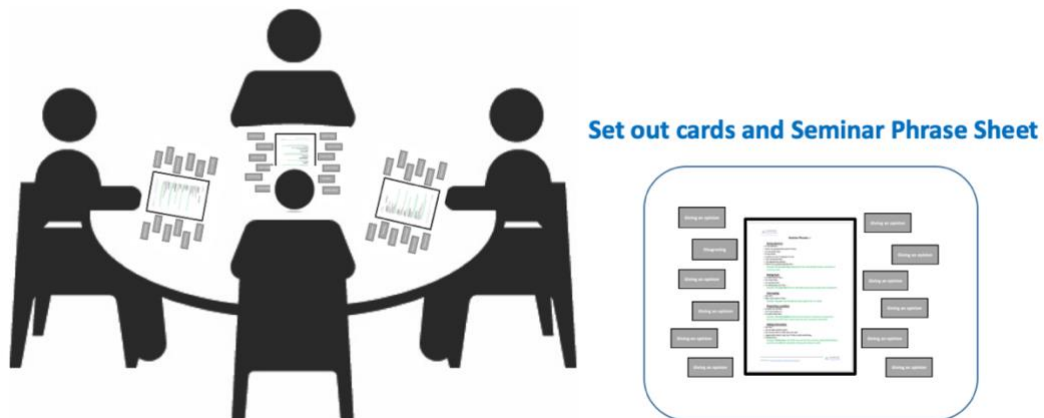
- Elicit 'signposting' in a seminar.
- Answer: Signpost Language is a range of fixed common phrases that are generally used in discussion to help orientate and focus the seminar.
- Give an example of phrase such as: Giving an opinion: 'From my perspective...'
- Elicit some of the phrases from the Seminar Phrases #1 sheet.
- Give out the Seminar Phrases #1 sheet and ask students to read through and highlight any of the phrases that are new or they don't usually use.

#### 3. Back to the board / hot seat

- Put students into groups of 4/5. One student sits on a seat with their back to board. Teacher writes one of the phrases on the board. Students try to explain the phrase using synonyms / mime / examples. The first student who can recite the exact phrase wins. More Information: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/hot-seat-0>

#### 4. Seminar Speaking Game

- Hand out **Student Seminar Playing Cards #2** to each student in each group.
- Give out one **Seminar Speaking Card #3** to each group.
- Students sit around a table with their **Seminar Phrases #1 Sheet** and the **Student Seminar Playing Cards #2** in front of them (see pic).



#### Objective

- For students to speak about a given topic (**Seminar Speaking Cards #3**) using prompt cards (**Student Seminar Playing Cards #2**) to activate the language on the **Seminar Phrases #1 sheet**.
- Students try to get rid of as many of their prompt cards (**Student Seminar Playing Cards #2**) as possible.
- Students discuss the topic for 5-10 minutes.
- **IMPORTANT: most important part is the discussion of the topic – tell students not to just focus on getting rid of their cards.**
- After 5- 10 minutes STOP the discussion. Students collect their cards and count how many cards they managed to get rid of.
- Then repeat the activity again but give out a different seminar speaking card.

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## Seminar Phrases Sheet #1

### Giving Opinions

- ⌚ In my opinion...
- ⌚ From my perspective/ point of view...
- ⌚ It's my sense that...
- ⌚ In my mind...
- ⌚ It seems to me / It appears to me...
- ⌚ I am convinced that...
- ⌚ I strongly/firmly believe
- ⌚ There is no question/doubt that...

*Example: **It's my sense that** adopting the Euro will benefit Europe's economies in numerous ways.*

### Stating facts

- ⌚ It's well known that....
- ⌚ It's a fact that....
- ⌚ I'm positive that....
- ⌚ I'm absolutely sure that.....

*Example: **It's a fact that** the Euro will make prices across Europe more transparent.*

### Interrupting

- ⌚ Yes, but...
- ⌚ May I just come in here,...

*Example: **Yes, but** it has already lost value against the U.S. dollar.*

### Pinpointing a problem

- ⌚ It seems to me that...
- ⌚ The real problem is...
- ⌚ It's quite clear that...

*Example: **The real problem is** that not all countries in Europe are necessarily in favour of the EURO which means that only some economies will benefit.*

### Adding Information

- ⌚ Yes, but...
- ⌚ Let me add another point...
- ⌚ Let me just add on what was just said...
- ⌚ I agree with what X said, but I'd like to add something...
- ⌚ Furthermore...

*Example: **Furthermore,** the EURO may not level the economic playing field between countries and different standards of living will continue to exist.*

### **Checking that you have understood**

- ⌚ Please correct me if I'm wrong, but...
- ⌚ Could I ask a few questions to check my understanding of your position?
- ⌚ Could we go through that again?

*Example: **Please correct me if I'm wrong, but** isn't the EURO supposed to raise the standards in the less affluent European countries?*

### **Proposing a solution**

- ⌚ What if \_X\_ were to...
- ⌚ Supposing \_X\_ tried...
- ⌚ Wouldn't a fair solution be...

*Example: **Supposing** all EU members adopted the Euro for a trial period with the option of abandoning the currency if economic matters failed to improve.*

### **Demonstrating Understanding**

- If I understood you correctly, you...
- So what you're saying is...
- Just to clarify, you mean...
- ⌚ I can understand your/that perspective in that ..

*Example: I appreciate your point of view and I agree completely.*

### **Focusing on difficulties**

- ⌚ The argument falls apart/is weakened...
- ⌚ The main issue/problem as I see it...
- ⌚ Where I have difficulty with your notion(s) is/are...

*Example: The main problem as I see it, is that not all European countries are starting from the same economic departure point.*

### **Disagreeing**

- ⌚ I disagree/ completely disagree
- ⌚ I'm afraid that I can't quite agree
- ⌚ I can see your point, but...
- ⌚ I have some reservations about that point of view...

*Example: I disagree with your last point because the EURO will equalize commerce, trade and labour costs.*

### **Seeing both sides**

- ⌚ On the one hand...
- ⌚ One way of looking at it is...
- ⌚ Yes, but the flip side of the issue is...
- ⌚ You can't ignore...

*Example: On the one hand adopting the EURO will bolster competition among European nations while on the other hand it will combat U.S., global market domination.*

## Student Seminar Playing Cards #2

<b>Giving an opinion</b>	<b>Stating facts</b>	<b>Interrupting</b>
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## Seminar Speaking Cards #3

### Seminar practice



- **Population.** Discuss the problems that the future will face with increasing population.

### Seminar practice



- **Education.** Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of more and more students going to university.

## Seminar Speaking Cards #3

### Seminar practice



- **Energy.** It is the responsibility of each citizen to reduce their energy consumption, not the government's responsibility. Do you agree?

### Seminar practice



- **Technology:** Some people believe that technology is making our lives worse. Discuss.

### Seminar Speaking Cards #3

#### Seminar practice



- **Crime.** Video games should be banned as they lead to people acting violently. Do you agree?

#### Seminar practice



- **Environment.** Plastic water bottles should be banned as they are harmful to the environment. Do you agree?

## Seminar Speaking Cards #3

### Seminar practice



- **Agriculture:** Discuss the benefits and drawbacks of genetically modifying plants.

### Seminar practice



- **Perspectives.** Discuss your home city / town from a commercial, environmental and historical perspective.

## Seminar Speaking Cards #3

### Seminar practice



- **Urbanisation.** Discuss the effects on human health from living in a big city.

### Seminar practice



- **Medical advancements:** Our society is becoming too dependent on pharmaceutical medicine. To what extent do you agree?



### Seminar Speaking Cards #3

#### Seminar practice



- **Consumption.** With regards to food, water, energy and goods, discuss the possible risks of consuming too much.

#### Seminar practice



- **Consumption.** The best way for newspapers to increase sales is to provide readers with entertaining stories. Do you agree?