IELI 2410 – Comprehending Lecture Discourse

Catalog Description
Develops techniques for understanding the planned and spontaneous academic discourse of university classrooms. Focuses on listening to learn in an academic classroom.

Course Goals
Students will...
- learn how academic lectures are typically structured and how lecturers signal structure
- listen to lectures and use knowledge of structure to take notes on content
- understand lecture content

Expected Learner Outcomes
After listening to a videotaped recording of a university lecture, students will demonstrate...

1) recognition of various organizational features and discourse structures of the lecture including:
   - discourse markers (e.g., topic & subtopic announcements, examples, supporting information, returns to topic after digression)
   - organizational sequences (e.g., definition, classification, concept explanation, problem/solution)
   - discourse features to be ignored (e.g., digressions, postponements)

2) ability to take notes that reflect organization and content of the lecture. Notes may employ...
   - key word outlines
   - bulleted lists
   - visual representations
   - other self-developed systems

3) understanding of lecture content by completing tasks such as...
   - filling in and making concept maps
   - answering questions
   - applying the content to situations
   - summarizing the content

Typical Classroom Topics / Activities
- Complete questionnaires about experience in listening to lectures, student questions, instructor questions, style of delivery, etc.
- Create a listening plan
- Predict content or content organization or types from topic announcement or organization
- Put information types, discourse events along with distracter discourse types, into possible and impossible sequences and have students evaluate them and write their own sequences for evaluation
- Read sections of a text or Wikipedia, Wikibook, Google news, etc., for background information and compare them with lecture information
- Extensive listening-to-lecture modules (see Jim Bame)
• Scramble key words of information (or types of information, and/or extra/insufficient information) to put in order
• Fill in skeleton notes
• Add relevant information to partially filled in visual representations (e.g., concept maps, flow charts, tables, etc.) and pictures
• Stop and ask for a summary of the last point or points during a lecture
• Do note-taking partner activities
• Do Individual note-taking activities
• Identify various types of topic announcements
• Identify information types (e.g., definitions, advantages, characteristics, etc.)
• Identify emphasis cues
• Identify discourse features (and its information) of lectures to be paid attention or ignored
• Identify types of student and professor questions as to how to get the content from their sequencing and intent
• Relate topic at hand with overall course content and goals
• Discuss notes, their content and organization
• Compare lecture with readings and decide what is present and what is not
• Reorganize raw notes into visual representations such as flow charts, spider maps, tables, etc.
• Visit university classrooms appropriate to the student's university status
• Write compare and contrast papers of delivery styles of classes visited or viewed
• Write content or delivery summaries or summary/reactions
• Present content summaries or general information types orally
• Write questions (true false, multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer about content and information types)
• Create a functional lecture language dictionary noting language used for each of the discourse events, discourse structures, etc.
• Apply content to a different situation
• Listen to professor prepared, video clips from USU and UCLA, various YouTube clips from various universities in order to practice the above