

Supporting International Students In Your University Class

Terri Bieszka, MA TESOL

Center for English Language and Culture for International Students (CELCIS)

Funding for this poster was through an Instructional Development Travel Grant 2017-2018

University instructors have many options for supporting international students in classes.

Here are 10 suggestions.

1. Structure classes mindfully.

- Have a goal and post a plan.
- Preview the topic and encourage student prediction.
- Include a variety of methods.

These steps help your internationals stay oriented during class.

2. Promote a community atmosphere.

- Be aware that internationals are easily isolated or segregated.
- Use collaboration and teamwork.
- Provide opportunities for internationals to share from their perspectives, if willing.

These suggestions help your students feel welcomed and comfortable.

3. Suggest reading strategies.

- Encourage the use of graphic organizers.
- Add a link for a technical dictionary to your class e-learning page.
- Remind students to focus on the relationship of ideas.

These ideas assist less-than-fluent readers to read more effectively and efficiently.

4. Guide note-takers as you lecture.

- Include previews: "Today's lecture will have 3 parts: a, b, and c."
- Use signal language.. "Now let's move on and take a look at my second point."
- Teach generally accepted abbreviations for technical words.

These tips help your students manage the dual tasks of listening and writing.

5. Vary the discussion formats.

- Use the "jigsaws" model to build expertise.
- Use online discussion boards so students can capture language and form a response.
- Include a few group roles that are less language focused.

These suggestions promote engagement by non-native students.

6. Build confidence for speaking up in class.

- Wait at least 10 seconds when you ask questions or ask for questions.
- Assign peer practice partners before important speaking assignments.
- Seek feedback from students more frequently.

These actions allow students the time to communicate more fluently.

7. Offer support for important writing tasks.

- Provide a model or basic template.
- Offer tools (i.e. library page, links.).
- Encourage use of Writing Center or library . (Arrange for a specific contact person).

These steps provide resources to help students meet assignment objectives.

8. Develop a variety of assignments.

- Use groups assignments with multiple roles.
- Assign projects that allow students to use their creativity.
- Plan multi-media assignments.

These methods provide ways for students to engage that are less language-based.

9. Reconsider your assessment methods.

- Use more frequent tests over a smaller amount of information.
- Use a variety of testing methods.
- Ask the student to explain how he thinks he is doing.

These strategies allow students to demonstrate what they have learned.

10. Give feedback frequently.

- Give feedback in writing.
- Provide a key for editing or correction marks.
- Include the correct answer.

These methods help students see their challenges and their progress.



Don't be surprised if these tips help your domestic students too!

Sources

TESOL International: The World Comes Together, March 27-30, 2018 Chicago IL

- Benson, S. "Effects of Written Corrective Feedback and Language Aptitude on Accuracy."
- Brooke, J., Godfroid, A, and Ohlogge, A. "Measuring Vocabulary Development in IEPs."
- Carrasquel, N., Davies, A., and Goussakova, E. "Irregular Verbs: A Corpus Analysis of Lists from Grammar Books."
- Clarke, N. and Uzun, O. "Ten Strategies to Improve Listening Comprehension."
- Foskey, D. and Thelen, S. "Using Online Discussion Boards for Reflective Writing."
- Hagen, S. "12 Tips for Grammar and Writing Instruction."
- Lara, J. and Speer, L. "Book Club Café: A New Approach to Extensive Reading."
- Ryan, G. "Reading: The Underemphasized Skill."
- Schmidt, H., "Engage, Enrich, and Empower IEP Students to Demonstrate Academic Readiness."
- Stamper, S. "10 Tips for Digital Literacy"



Contact information

Terri Bieszka, Language Specialist

Center for English Language and Culture for International Students (CELCIS)
Ellsworth Hall
Western Michigan University
1903 W. Michigan Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

theresa.bieszka@wmich.edu
(269) 387-4800