

CHECKLIST FOR OBSERVING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Report what you observe in my class and help me to become a better teacher

TARGET LANGUAGE USE

The TEACHER and STUDENTS speak in the target language (TL)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50% of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> 50%-75% of the time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 75%-90% of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> 90%+ of the time |

Students cannot acquire spoken language if they do not hear it.

*Over 90% target language use is recommended in the 2011 ACTFL position statement.
Not using the TL in a language class is like a math teacher chatting about sports most of the time.*

The teacher checks for comprehension frequently

- by asking individual students
- by carefully observing all students in class
- by listening for responses from the whole class
- by asking for translation occasionally

Students cannot acquire language if they do not understand what the teacher is saying.

The teacher must speak in the TL and it must be comprehensible to the students.

The teacher offers opportunities for sophisticated language use

- by embellishing the basic statements that students make
- by asking a variety of questions in a variety of formats and levels
- by inviting students to create with the language rather than simply
 - a) repeating
 - b) responding mainly with formulas
 - c) memorizing dialogues

Students should be expected to think and perform at high levels—even in beginning courses

*Memorization is the LOWEST level of thinking in the New Bloom's Taxonomy.
We need to encourage students to analyze, evaluate and design at all course levels.*

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS

The teacher raises the level of student attention

- by **INVOLVING STUDENTS** in the narration
- by allowing **STUDENT INPUT** to direct portions of the lesson
- by talking **TO** individual students
- by talking **ABOUT** specific students
- by referring to places/locations/people/topics **OF INTEREST TO STUDENTS**

The students are actively engaged in the lesson

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> by gesturing | <input type="checkbox"/> by acting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> by contributing ideas to the lesson | <input type="checkbox"/> by responding to questions |

The students are held accountable for the lesson

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> by speaking the target language when asked | <input type="checkbox"/> by helping each other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> by retelling material in their own words | <input type="checkbox"/> by translation, when asked |
| <input type="checkbox"/> by unannounced quizzes | |



The teacher promotes grammatical accuracy

- by briefly explaining the meaning of unfamiliar or new items
- by using the unfamiliar or new items multiple times & in different contexts
- by asking students to predict correct grammatical usage
- by requiring increased accuracy as students progress

The teacher demonstrates appropriate correction techniques

- by modeling accuracy: Rewarding the student's attempts while acknowledging the content of the student's statement
- by demonstrating the value of accuracy: Stating the meaning of the inaccurate construction
- by inviting the student to correct him/herself

The teacher promotes higher-level thinking skills

- by asking students to synthesize the language in a story retell
- by asking students to create imaginative situations
- by asking students to supply motivation for actions in the story

The teacher tailors the tasks to individual student ability

- by asking many types and levels of questions
- by expecting multiple levels of answers to questions (one-word, short phrase, complete sentence, extended discourse)
- by requiring longer, more detailed, and more accurate narration from the most able students

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

There seems to be a routine to begin the class

- teacher greets students as they arrive
- students arrive on time
- students are on task
- students are prepared
- students are working by the time the late bell rings

The teacher models proactive classroom management

- by showing genuine interest in the students
- by remaining calm and in control
- by taking the time to listen to student suggestions
- by looking at individual students with a calm demeanor
- by moving closer to potential disruptions
- by using body language to control student behavior non-verbally
- by using facial expressions that are appropriate to the situation (smiling, not angry, blank expression, etc.)
- by offering choices to students who fail to co-operate

There seems to be a routine to end the class

- students are not waiting by the door to leave class
- students are working and/or attentive until the bell rings
- students are not packing up 5 minutes before the end of class
- students wait to be dismissed by the teacher, not the bell

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