

APSU Writing Center

Teaching Multilingual Students

The goal of the APSU Writing Center is to assist all students: undergraduates, graduate students, full-time, part-time and those who are attending classes on main campus as well as Fort Campbell campus.

Who Multilingual Writers Are

- International Students: International visa holders.
- US Residents: Immigrant or non-immigrant students educated partly in the US.

Key Points

- Distinguish: Don't assume a student isn't American because English isn't their first language.
- Stigma: Some students may resist the label "English Language Learner" due to past stigmatization.

International Students

- Time in US: Recent arrivals with varied degrees of prior exposure.
- Cultural Comfort: May face culture shock; varied familiarity with US norms.
- Language Learning: Textbook-based; might struggle with immersion.
- Grammar Knowledge: Understand formal rules but might not apply them consistently.
- Listening/Speaking: Limited exposure to natural speech; may need time to express thoughts.
- Writing/Reading: Different organizational patterns; unfamiliar with US essay structures.
- Educational Culture: Varied academic traditions impacting interaction with instructors and peers.

Domestic Students

- Time in US: Partly educated in the US school system.
- Cultural Comfort: Varies from fully Americanized to balancing dual cultures.
- Language Learning: Acquired English through immersion; might still be acquiring aspects of English.
- Grammar Knowledge: Intuitive grasp; can generate alternative phrasings.
- Listening/Speaking: Generally fluent but might occasionally struggle.
- Writing/Reading: Familiar with US essay conventions; may still make grammatical errors.
- Educational Culture: Comfortable with US academic norms.

Common Issues

- Limited lecture comprehension
- Limited class participation
- Reluctance to use office hours
- Misunderstanding content
- Writing issues (organization, vocabulary, grammar)
- Improper use of sources
- Poor test performance

APSU Writing Center

Teaching Multilingual Students - Writing Tutors

Writing Tutor Support Strategies

Understanding the Student

- Learn About the Student: Understand their background and comfort level with English.
- Be Patient and Encouraging: Build confidence through positive reinforcement.

Structuring Sessions

- Set Clear Goals: Focus on one or two main issues per session.
- Step-by-Step Approach: Break down the writing process into manageable steps.

Addressing Common Challenges

1. Grammar and Syntax

- Prioritize Major Errors: Focus on errors that hinder understanding.
- Teach Grammar in Context: Use examples from their writing.

2. Vocabulary

- Build Academic Vocabulary: Help students learn discipline-specific terms.
- Use Synonyms and Context Clues: Teach strategies for deducing meanings.

3. Organization

- Outline the Essay: Help create a clear outline before writing.
- Use Transitions: Teach the importance of connecting ideas.

4. Thesis and Argumentation

- Clarify the Thesis: Ensure a clear and concise thesis statement.
- Develop Arguments: Assist in building strong, supported arguments.

5. Citations and Sources

- Explain Citation Styles: Ensure understanding of required styles.
- Teach Source Integration: Show how to integrate quotes and paraphrases.

Drafting and Revising

- Encourage Multiple Drafts: Stress the importance of revising.
- Provide Specific Feedback: Give targeted, actionable feedback.
- Model Good Writing: Show examples of effective writing.

Developing Independence

- Teach Self-Editing: Show how to proofread and correct common errors.
- Promote Writing Resources: Recommend grammar guides and writing handbooks.

Building Confidence

- Celebrate Progress: Acknowledge improvements to boost confidence.
- Create a Supportive Environment: Foster a non-judgmental, encouraging atmosphere.

APSU Writing Center

Teaching Multilingual Students - Faculty

Faculty Support Strategies

Lecture Comprehension

- Allow lecture recordings.
- Provide and emphasize lecture outlines and key points.
- Use visuals and write down critical vocabulary.
- Post lecture notes online.

Class Participation

- Post discussion questions in advance.
- Speak clearly and be patient.
- Support students by offering words or rephrasing responses.

Office Hours

- Set specific appointments.
- Get to know students' backgrounds and learning processes.
- Check comprehension by asking students to explain concepts.

Writing Performance

- Provide detailed assignment guidelines and rubrics.
- Discuss ideas and guide through the writing process.
- Require drafts and provide thoughtful feedback.
- Correct significant errors and teach citation skills carefully.

Test Performance

- Provide study guides and review sessions.
- Allow extra time for exams to ensure fair assessment of knowledge.

APSU Writing Center

Teaching Multilingual Students

References

Bitchener, J., & Ferris, D. R. (2012). *Written corrective feedback in second language acquisition and writing*. Routledge.

Moore Howard, R. (2001). *Plagiarism: What should a teacher do?* In T. Devoss & K. Rosati (Eds.), *Writing and the digital age*. Allyn and Bacon.

Pecorari, D. (2003). *Good and original: Plagiarism and patchwriting in academic second-language writing*.

UNC Writing Center. (n.d.). Teaching multilingual students. Retrieved June 14, 2024, from <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/teaching-multilingual-students/>

University of Washington Tacoma Teaching and Learning Center. (n.d.). *Working with multilingual writers*. Retrieved June 14, 2024, from <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/tlc/working-multilingual-writers>