

# CHECKLIST FOR OBSERVING A WORLD LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

## TARGET LANGUAGE USE

### • **The teacher speaks in the target language (TL)**

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

***WHY? Because students can't acquire spoken language if they don't hear it.***

Since 2011, ACTFL has recommended over 90% target language use in the classroom.

Not using the TL in a language class is like a band teacher letting students play ping pong every day and never playing music.

### • **Teacher uses varied comprehension checks often**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Observing student facial expressions and body language                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Observing response time and confidence of students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asking questions to the whole class (choral answers)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Listening for spontaneous responses (whole class)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asking differentiated questions to students, depending on their ability (individual answers) | <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally asking for translations               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inviting creative responses  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unannounced quizzes  |   |

***WHY? Because students can't acquire a language if they don't understand what the teacher is saying.***

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

It is not comprehensible input if students do not understand.

### • **Teacher offers opportunities for sophisticated language use by...**

- Embellishing the basic statements that students make
- Asking a variety of questions in a variety of formats and levels
- Inviting students to create with the language rather than just:
  - a) Repeating    b) Responding with formulas    c) Memorizing dialogues    d) Conjugating verbs

***WHY? Because students can think at high levels—even in beginning courses.***

Memorization is one of the **LOWEST** levels of thinking in the *New Bloom's Taxonomy* and other measures.

We need to encourage students to analyze, evaluate and design at all course levels.

## BEST PRACTICE WORLD LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS

### • **Teacher raises the level of student attention by...**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Involving students in the narration   | <input type="checkbox"/> Allowing student input to direct portions of the lesson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talking <b>to</b> individual students   | <input type="checkbox"/> Talking <b>about</b> specific students                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Referring to places/locations/people/cultural practices/topics that are of interest to the students |  |

### • **Students are actively engaged in the lesson by...**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gesturing                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Reacting                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing their ideas to the lesson | <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to questions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interacting with one another           | <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing responses       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acting                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing                 |

### • **Students are held accountable for the lesson by...**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking the target language          | <input type="checkbox"/> Helping each other                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retelling material in their own words | <input type="checkbox"/> Translation, when asked                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Formative assessments                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing in the target language or in L1 |



• **Teacher promotes grammatical accuracy by...**

- Briefly explaining the meaning of unfamiliar or new items (“Pop-up grammar”)
- Using the unfamiliar or new items multiple times & in different contexts
- Asking students to predict correct grammatical usage
- Requiring increased accuracy as students progress in fluency

• **Teacher demonstrates appropriate correction techniques by...**

- Modeling accuracy: Rewarding the student's attempts while acknowledging the content of the student statements
- Demonstrating the value of accuracy: Stating the meaning of the inaccurate construction
- Allowing students to correct themselves

• **Teacher promotes higher-level thinking skills by...**

- Asking students to synthesize the language by retelling material in their own words (not memorized speeches)
- Asking students to create imaginative situations
- Asking students to supply motivation for characters' actions in the story

• **Teacher differentiates by tailoring tasks to individual student ability by...**

- Being aware of ability levels of different students
- Asking many types and levels of questions
- Expecting multiple levels of answers to questions from different students  
(one-word answers, short phrases, complete sentences, extended discourse)
- Requiring longer, more detailed, and more accurate narration from the most capable students

## EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

• **There seems to be a routine to begin the class**

- Teacher greets students as they arrive
- Students arrive on time
- Students have a task for the beginning of class
- Students are prepared
- Students are on task
- Class begins promptly (limited down time)

• **Teacher models proactive classroom management during the class by...**

- Showing genuine interest in students
- Providing meaningful brain breaks
- Taking time to listen to student suggestions
- Changing activities frequently
- Moving closer to potential disruptions before they escalate
- Offering choices to students who fail to co-operate
- Using body language to control student behavior
- Remaining calm
- Using facial expressions that are appropriate to the situation
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

• **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

**Observations:**