

Eseducators PD June 3 2010 Ideas from Group Discussions on how to increase participation of EAL students in mainstream classrooms

Secondary School Sector

Topic: Human Rights. Setting context: **What can students bring?**

Start: Model the concept via short video clips (e.g. from Amnesty International) in order to enable the eliciting of definitions either as whole class or in groups.

Group activities such as simple **directed questions** such as 'Is it good to hit someone?' 'Is it good for a child of 12 to work?'

Ask **questions relevant to the topic that can be answered from students' own contexts**; groups of three to discuss issues (for example, 'rights and wrongs' with added aims of building confidence and **learning from each other**

[Candy as ed.: *assuming that the mix of EAL and native speaking students are prepared to accept working with each other by having done some previous connecting activities*]

Using the community as a source of primary data related to topics and issues in lessons.

Setting up effective buddy systems – self selected – rewards; set up permanent learning groups.

Use **information gap activities** that involve rotation.

University Sector

Investigative Analysis – Why don't international students (IS) interact? Is it because local students (LS) do not want to interact? How to get interaction? Local students need to be aware that their **cross cultural knowledge** may be limited.

Lecturers/tutors devise activities that mean **IS and LS work together both inside and outside the classroom** and that doing this earns the student some credibility/feedback from the teacher. Have the **awareness** that after the task there is separation again so consider how to deal with this.

Students may need to **go beyond the classroom academic aims e.g. doing a survey to find something in common** as a lead in to perhaps learning about opportunities such as sports clubs, etc.

How to **encourage LS** to find opportunities? How to **provide opportunities**? There are so many issues that discourage interaction. **Building group activities into course work involved with assessment** would be an encouraging factor. For example, could Oral Presentations be **presented in two languages** and then, if this is a requirement, students would realise a need?

Need to include in tasks **broader perspectives** so that local students can begin to understand the advantage of having students from a **global context** in their midst.

Primary Sector

There is already a strong focus on **connection activities** and an aim to make learners **happy and safe**. **Enabling activities** in small groups. Primary methodology **focuses on cooperative learning** – begin with **cooperative games** such as 'mirroring'. There are lessons on **learning how to listen, how to take turns**. Take advantage of games that children enjoy such as '**Quick and Smart competitions**' which are performed in groups. There is a big emphasis on integrating new students into the class. If a student is not happy everyone knows it. A useful interactive learning activity for a topic of study could be **surveying** each other or people in the community.

N.B. ALL STUDENTS (IS + LS) BENEFIT FROM THIS KIND OF TEACHING.

Thank you to all the participants at the PD session for your valuable input - especially the facilitators Kate Cadman, Sandor Horvath and Debra Dolman – Candy Gray.