

Reducing the Barriers to Effective Intercultural Communication

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It is important to see all the barriers as *CHALLENGES* to be overcome and to *EXPLORE* new ways of overcoming problems through self examination and consultation with other teachers, ESL Staff and student support staff.

Be *OPEN - MINDED*.

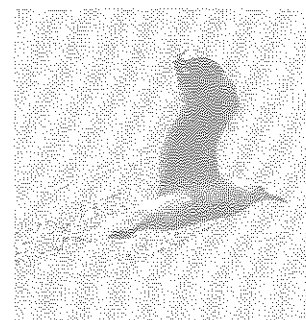
1 Reducing the Language Barriers

- Be aware of difficulties caused by use of slang, colloquialisms, idiom, prepositional phrases (eg "in the light of"), accents, passive verbs etc. If used, explain the meanings.
- Be aware of cultural differences in greetings and everyday conversation. Refer to Country Cultural Background Information Section page 39.
- Speak *clearly* and *simply* at normal *volume* without being simplistic or patronising.
- Be prepared to *clarify* meanings, yours and the students.
- *Check* to see if you and the student both understand the message.
- Be aware of your own communication *style*.

Refer to Section 'Meeting International Students' Language Needs page 219 for more specific guidelines for the classroom.

2 Reducing Non Verbal Language Barriers

- Be very conscious of the fact that non verbal communication can be very different in other cultures.
- Make an effort to find out about the unspoken codes of a culture - see Country Cultural Background Information page 39.
- Do not assume you understand any non verbal communication unless you are familiar with the culture.
- Develop an awareness of your *own* non verbal communication which may be insulting in other cultures.
- Try to make your associated verbal and non verbal communication congruent.
- Watch for students' non verbal clues. International students may not ask questions nor tell you if they are having difficulty.
- If the student's non verbal communication is insulting to you in your culture, do not take it personally. Instead discuss the cultural differences with them; if and when time permits.



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