

Establishing Teacher Credibility in Intercultural Classrooms

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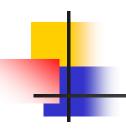
Importance of the Study

- For cross-cultural understanding
- For better communication
- For teacher professionalism



Research Questions

- What are the current state of teacher credibility between native and nonnative instructors, particularly ITAs?
- What are the factors that affect teacher credibility of ITAs?
- How to enhance teacher credibility through better communication?



Methods of Research

Nature: action research

- -Literature review
- -Cultural dialogues
- -Survey



Findings and Suggestions

- Differences between native and nonnative instructors
 - 1. On average, domestic instructors were rated higher than nonnative instructors (McCroskey, 1998)
 - 2. Low perceptions of ITAs: The Oh No! Syndrome (Yook & Albert, 1999)



Diagnosis of the problems

- Language barriers
 speech (fluency, pronunciation, accent)
 grammatical structure (errors, written
 style)
- Nonverbal differences
 lack of nonverbal support
 distracting nonverbal signals
- Different communication styles
 Collective vs. individual
 Deductive vs. inductive
 Explicit vs. implicit



Pedagogical challenges

Inexplicit expectations

Unclear answers

Classroom skills

The mechanism

Lack of homophily in background Different cultural communication styles



Strategies to improve teacher credibility for ITAs

- 1. Making your expectations explicit
- Clarify your expectations in both oral and written forms
- Establish instructional alignment between declared goals, activities and assessment
- Articulate your rationale
- Provide examples
- Involve students in decision making
- Have students interpret the tasks



- 2. Provide meaningful answers
- Anticipate the difficult aspects of the course
- Paraphrase student questions
- Ask students to rephrase their questions
- Provide answers in student cultural style



- 3. Initiate positive interactions with your students
- Call your students by their names
- Use self-disclosure and humor
- Enhance non-verbal immediacy
- Provide prompt responses
- Involve marginal students



- 4. Seeking improvement through data driven reflections
- Collect data through your own survey
- Use course evaluation results
- Seek explanations for the results
- Consult with experienced teachers
- List out things to be improved
- Compare the results



Making sense of the data

 Comparison between an ITA & a Nativedominated sample

Clarity of objectives (3.89 vs. 4.12)

General understanding (3.50 vs. 4.15)

Gestures (4.10 vs. 3.89)

Eye contact (4.78 vs. 4.59)

Competence (5.78 vs. 6.02)

Trustworthiness (6.39 vs. 6.16)

Caring (5.04 vs. 4.31)

- Language clarity--perceived competence
- Nonverbal immediacy--perceived teacher caring and character



Conclusions

- Challenges are unavoidable to ITAs due to the language and cultural barriers
- It is possible to establish teacher credibility through effective verbal and nonverbal communication
- Challenges can be used as opportunities for the professional growth of the ITAs