

Some Tips for Classes--Bernard M.--Taipei English Tutor--ESL

Greetings--there are countless others, but these are the ones I use, so try to recognize them.

What's up? What's new? How's everything? How are things?

“Teacher Bernard” is not correct. Just use Bernard.

IDENTIFYING NAMES: Jim (first name) Jones (last name) Jones (last name), Jim (first name)

I suggest you not beginning conversations with declaring that there is “nothing special” to discuss. This phrase is a conversation killer--CNN interviewees do not say it. Pick something, ANYTHING AT ALL, to discuss.

When you do not *understand* something, do not simply repeat some word or phrase. To the listener this does not in any way indicate what you are having trouble with.

Try to clarify things by saying:

- Could you explain what that means?
- Does that mean. . . ?
- XXXX is what you mean?
- What does X mean?
- You mean . . . ?
- I didn't (quite) understand that.

However, if you did not *hear* a word, then say:

- Did you say. . . ?
- I didn't quite hear that.

If you have trouble with spelling a word, try using one of these:

- Could you spell that?
- I'm not familiar with that word?
- How do you pronounce this?

INCORRECT: How to spell? How to say?

- When you finally or suddenly understand something, you can say:
I got it. -- OK! -- I see. -- I didn't know that. [Not I know.]
- Do not repeat, as in OK OK to confirm something. To English speakers, this sounds like you are annoyed with the speaker and wish him to stop talking .
- You can confirm someone else's statement by saying *YES*, but English speakers do not normally confirm what they *themselves* think by repeatedly interjecting their own speaking with *YES*.

Super Overused Word

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| 1. share | 13. mention | 23. because and for (in the beginning of sentences) |
| 2. join | 14. phenomenon | 24. issue |
| 3. attend | 15. because | 25. coach |
| 4. news | 16. yes (see above) | 26. success |
| 5. accompany | 17. impressive | 27. maybe |
| 6. should | 18. travel/trip | 28. dead |
| 7. convenient | 19. People (students/relatives, coworkers/contestant/competitors workers) | 29. experience, situation, condition |
| 8. knowledge/know | 20. abroad | 30. exercise |
| 9. choose | 21. beyond my expectation/imagination | 31. take myself as an example |
| 10. boss | 22. so | |
| 11. efficiency | | |
| 12. talk about | | |

SCHEDULING

- Use *cancel* or *skip*. Do NOT use *postpone* or *delay*. It is helpful to add when we will meet next.
- e.g.: I need to **cancel** tonight, see you next Friday at 2:00 pm