

The ESL Manifesto for

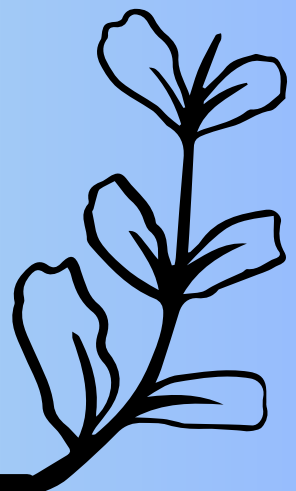
COMPOSITION AND WRITING

Things to add to your toolkit if
you're an international student

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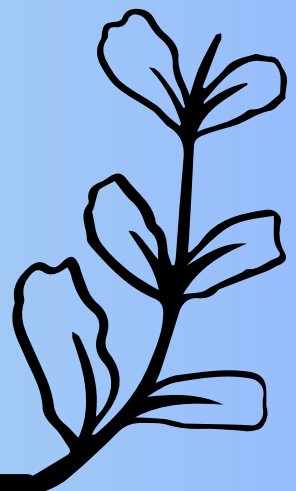


KNOW YOUR TOOLS, USE YOUR TOOLS: A MANIFESTO CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND MULTIMODAL COMPOSING

English writing and composition classes can be intimidating when your first language isn't English. In fact, every class can be intimidating in a language you haven't mastered. Thankfully, pedagogy continues to grow more and more open-minded, welcoming, and inclusive of all of their student's unique needs. In other words, American academia has never been more accessible to international students.

So what's changing? Multimodality has entered the sphere, and it's changing the way all people write and compose. Not just international students. The teachers of today are embracing new media and multimodal practices that aid and enhance the composing process of everyone. So let's leave the shame at the door and utilize all the available tools to become better writers and students.

Below is a list of these tools that we hope will help you begin to embrace the helping hand of technology. It is imperative, in a contemporary classroom setting, that international students avail themselves of any and all tools they may need to be successful in their new environment.





THE TOOLS AND HOW TO USE THEM IN YOUR FAVOR

The Basics

- **Translator:** Yes, you're allowed. No, don't translate entire essays on there. If you know more than one language, it's normal to forget certain words and even get them mixed up with others. A quick check with a free translator will solve the issue.
- **Dictionary:** Physical or online, dictionaries are a great way to improve your skills in any language and widen your vocabulary. If you're struggling to find the right word to translate a great idea, grab a dictionary.
- **Thesaurus:** For synonyms and antonyms, a thesaurus is your best friend. As ESL students, it isn't uncommon to not know the various ways to express ourselves fully, so there's no shame in turning to this tool when you start to get repetitive with wording.
- **E-readers:** More often than not, an e-book is a student's lifesaver, ESL or not. With an e-reader or even a reading app on any of your devices, you can quickly highlight, annotate, and even search for the meaning of words with just your fingers.

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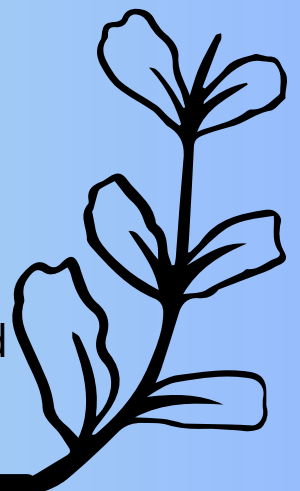




THE TOOLS AND HOW TO USE THEM IN YOUR FAVOR

The Basics

- **Youtube:** You'd be surprised how much you can learn on social media platforms, especially video-based apps. Use this tool as a free tutor if you struggle in any of your courses, not just composition – from math and science to art and design, social media typically has the answer. Language barriers are hard, and sometimes refreshing what you learn in class with a crash course in your native language helps.
- **Podcasts:** Listening and surrounding yourself and your senses with the language you are learning is beneficial in many ways. Reading in English is one thing, but to get acclimated to the sounds of the language podcasts can be amazing. Next time you're working on a project, cleaning your space, commuting, or simply find some free time, listen to a fun or educational podcast in English.
- **Grammar-checker:** Most, if not all, computers and smart-devices have built-in autocorrect, but it isn't always enough. You can get an extension on your browser of choice to check not only your grammar, but also your tone and syntax.

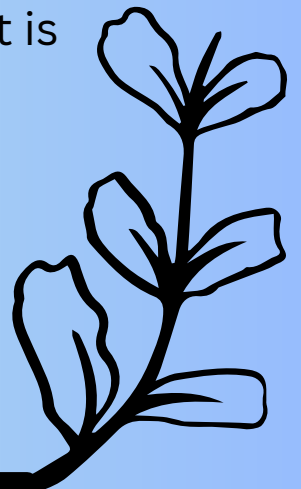


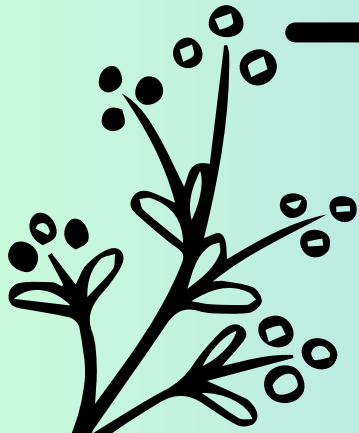


THE TOOLS AND HOW TO USE THEM IN YOUR FAVOR

Closer to Home

- **The Writing Center:** All universities have one, and it's there for a reason. If you're struggling to write in your second language, asking for help from your peers at the WC is the best you can do. We promise they'll be nice!
- **Your advisors/mentors:** They're also there for a reason! If you find that you're doing your best but still aren't grasping something, ask the professionals. They love to talk about their field, and will talk your ears off if you let them.
- **Friends and peers:** Last but not least, make friends. Odds are you have done this already, so if you have them, talk to them. Friends are there to help and support you. In the same vein, your classmates are probably experiencing similar doubts and struggles, and helping each other stay afloat is always the best approach.





HEAD TO

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