Using the Cell Phone to Promote Homework

Digital Resources for Independent Learning Opportunities for ESOL
MCAE, May 12, 2017

Basic principle:
Start with the teaching/learning goals, not with the use of technology for its own sake. Think about what you want to do, and then how the technology can help you. Always have an explicit rationale for integrating technology.

Goal:
To get students to use their new language in between classes and to become more active agents in their own learning in between classes.

Have students use phone cameras to build on language learning you are introducing in the classroom. Keep a checklist for students who respond. Recognize that it might take practice to catch on. Each suggestion below requires preparation and modeling to make it work effectively. You could try some of the ideas in class before assigning them as homework. Keep it simple, and create predictable routines.

Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
Camera	**Texting**	**Tweeting/Texting**
Ask students to take photos of signs they do not understand and send them, to you via a text message before the next class. Text a reminder to students if they are sluggish about responding. Compile the signs, print out and use as teaching tools for the next class. Build on the vocabulary, including context (where was the sign) Ask students to take photos of people "doing" something to practice present continuous and to text you a picture and one sentence beneath it. Ex: She is praying.	Assign partners. Give a prompt related to your place in the curriculum that encourages interaction. Ask students to text their partner about the prompt. Assign a student to initiate. For example, in a unit on health, ask students to respond to: How do you feel about going to the doctor in the US? During the next class, ask each student to report on what they found out about his or her partner via the texts.	When you are reading a biography or novel, ask students to display understanding of the main character by creating tweets in that person's voice, or by texting you in that person's voice. Ask for one text or tweet from each student and compare the tweets during the next class.

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