

Integrating Purpose-Driven Design, University Policies, Social Support and Technology tools to Enhance Student Engagement in EAP Classrooms

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Abstract

While student engagement is key to effective higher education, it is often addressed via isolated measures rather than systematic cultivation. This presentation proposes an integrative, multi-layered model for fostering sustainable engagement in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classrooms at a Sino-British transnational university in China. Drawing on pedagogical practice and preliminary institutional data, it demonstrates how four interdependent pillars generate meaningful engagement: (1) purpose cultivation (Xerri, Radford and Shacklock, 2018) linking EAP tasks to future careers, program choices, and interdisciplinary relevance; (2) university policy alignment (Chickering and Gamson, 1987), which can include attendance frameworks, achievement certificates, and targeted advisor support; (3) social support architectures (Vindi Novita et al., 2022), including teacher scaffolding, peer support and buddy programs; and (4) strategic integration of digital tools (de Pedro, et al, 2025) such as Kahoot, Quizlet and AI integration. The presenter will share project-based learning designs such as group proposals, individual mini-vivas, and authentic problem-solving scenarios that can build students' critical thinking, cooperation and time management skills, as well as extracurricular activities (language exchanges and competitions) that boost engagement beyond the classroom. Attendees are invited to pose questions and engage in collegial discussion on practical implementation, potential limitations and contextual adaptation.

Index Terms

Student Engagement, Higher Education, Educational Technology