Listening to Our Learners

Key Takeaways from MCAEL's 2024 Professional Development Conference
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<td>From your experience, what factors contribute to learners being satisfied with their learning progress?</td>
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<td>How can we make sure learners' voices are included when we are making decisions in the classroom or about our programs?</td>
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Learner Satisfaction

From your experience, what factors contribute to learners being satisfied with their learning progress?

Idea from the Coalition

- Quality of instruction
- Opportunities to practice their English in class
- Increased confidence
- Increased communication independence outside of the classroom
- Achieving their learning goals
- Job attainment or promotion
- Passing the citizenship test
- Building a sense of community / making friends in class
Learner Satisfaction
How can instructors, volunteers and programs monitor and show learners their progress?

Ideas from the Coalition

- Unit pre and post tests
- Exit tickets
- One-on-one discussions with the instructor
- Celebrate individual successes in class (e.g: job, spoke with cashier, increased confidence)
- Remind learners of where they were at the first class and where they are now
- Share learning objectives
- Placement tests
- Track attendance and give certificates for meeting attendance goals
- Correct speaking mistakes
- Students document their own progress (e.g: conversations they've had, language skills they've learned)
Communication Needs

How can we incorporate more speaking and listening instruction that supports the everyday communication needs of learners?

Ideas from the Coalition

- Create a comfortable space for learners that feels welcoming, safe and normalizes making mistakes
- Ask students about situations where they need support using English (ex: speaking with child’s teacher, doctor’s office, emergencies)
- Designated class time for conversation practice (ex: small talk topics for warm ups, conversational free time before or after class, conversation cards)
- Role play conversations and phone calls of real life situations
- Use and discuss realia (grocery store flyers, emails from school)
- Use mini-projects to encourage students to go into the community and practice
- Close the textbook more often to encourage speaking
- Improve listening skills by listening to songs, documentaries, movie clips, radio and podcasts in class or as assignments
Communication Needs

How can we incorporate more speaking and listening instruction that supports the everyday communication needs of learners?

Ideas from the Coalition

- Discuss linguistic reductions like “going to = gonna” and “want to = wanna”
- Use the Color Vowel System
- Make a checklist when lesson planning to ensure lessons include listening and speaking activities
- Encourage learners to complete learning activities in pairs or small groups
Including Learners’ Voices

How can we make sure learners’ voices are included when we are making decisions in the classroom or about our programs?

Ideas from the Coalition

- Conduct needs assessment to understand why learners are taking a class and what they want to learn
- Provide choices in learning activities / practice differentiation
- Establish a group of learner representatives who advise program on learner needs
- Ask learners “What do you want?” “What do you want more of?” “What do you want less of?”
- Make a suggestion box available for learners
- Students evaluate teacher and programs to provide ideas for improvement
- Listen to learners’ dissatisfaction with personal level placement and frustrations with how to advance
- Utilize translation services, digital and online translators to provide feedback surveys in learners’ primary languages
- Ask learners their favorite and least favorite activities. See how you can use their favorite activities in future lessons. Find new ways to present least favorite classroom activities
Acknowledgement

This summary would not have been possible without the input of the ESOL educators and program administrators who participated in the Coalition Cafe and MCAEL's *Professional Development Conference: Learner Centered Instructions* on March 15, 2024.

Thank you for sharing your ideas, expertise and experiences.

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