

SESSION: Introduction to Teaching a Language

Date: 11/6/16

Time: (1 hour)

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this session participants will be able to:

- Students will understand the diversity of students and their motivations to learn a language
- Students will know the differences between teacher-centered and student-centered classrooms, and be able to identify ways to make their classrooms more student-centered.

Materials: whiteboard and marker, handouts

Procedures:

Step 1: Warm Up – Discussion of language learning experiences ----- 15 mins

Begin class by dividing students into small groups and asking 3 questions: (space out questions so students have time to discuss each individually)

- When you were learning a language, what helped you to learn the language? What classroom activities? What did you do at home to help you learn English?

- Why are people motivated to learn a language? What demotivates people to learn a language?

- How can teachers motivate students to learn a language?

After discussion, come back together and have groups share their results.

Step 2: What is the role of a teacher in a classroom? ----- 20 mins

Bring students back together, and summarize previous discussion by summarizing that there are many different ways to learn a language, it depends on the student. So what do we do as teachers to encourage learning?

What is the role of the teacher in the classroom?

- Scaffolding – how do you build a house? mentality
 - Helping students to do what they can't do on their own
 - Act as support system,
- Student centered vs. teacher centered classrooms
 - Show students pictures of two different classrooms. What are the similarities? The differences? What types of classrooms do each show?

Teacher-Centered Classrooms: Classrooms you know best: teacher stands in the front and lectures, students sit in rows and absorb. These classrooms tend to look first to the needs of the teacher over the students, and if teachers don't look out for themselves no one will.

On the other hand, if the needs of students are not met, will the student be happy? Can they learn well? If students are unhappy and not learning, will the needs of the teacher be met?

Student-Centered Classrooms: The teacher makes an effort to get to know every student, their likes and dislikes, their strengths and weaknesses, how they learn well and not so well. Every student is respected as an individual. Classroom activities are designed to respond to needs of different students and different students or groups of students may be taking part in different types of activities at the same time. Students take an active role in negotiating course content and procedures, and the teacher takes their feelings and opinions into account when designing lessons.

Step 3: Teacher-centered or student-centered? ----- 10 mins

Look at 1st activity in workbook. Have students read each example, and write “T” if it is a Teacher-centered classroom, or a “S” for student-centered classroom. When students are finished, bring groups back together and go over results.

1. T The teacher’s primary role is just delivering the lesson.
2. S The teacher has activities where students can show who they are and their interests
3. S The teacher knows their students’ names and how they learn best
4. T Most of the talking in class is done by the teacher
5. S If students are confused or need more time to learn, the lesson can be changed to help them
6. S The students can speak, participate, and share their ideas to practice English

Step 4: Brainstorming ----- 10 mins

Divide students into small groups. Have them use their handouts to brainstorm ways to make classrooms more student-centered. Remember, there are many ways to learn English, so how can we teach things in many different ways?

How to make your classroom more student centered? Some examples:

- Say it and also write it
- Gesture and make movements
- Draw pictures and diagrams
- Supply a word or phrase when a student is stuck
- Remind them of what they are supposed to do.
- Ask leading questions to help students remember.
- Provide guidance practice (be a mentor), and give just-in-time feedback and needed praise
- Emphasize key points and scaffold review
- Model how to do activities.

Step 4: How can you teach it? Activity ----- 20 mins

Give each group

. Why are people motivated to learn another language?

- Improve one's self
- Prepare for or advance in a career
- Visit other countries
- Learn about another culture
- Communicate with foreigners
- Get better grades at school
- Earn external awards
- Be a certain kind of person
- Learning for fun (young learners)

2. What demotivates people to learn foreign languages?

- If we've never tried to learn a language we may think it is simpler (and faster) than it is.
- We have to sound like somebody else, not like ourselves. (Ou-là-là!)
- We have to make sounds we are not used to making.
- We get frustrated because despite hard work studying, we cannot produce what we learned.
- We hit plateaus where it seems like we are not progressing at all.
- A 4-year old native speaker speaks better than us. We feel stupid!

3. How can teachers motivate students?

- Give frequent, honest praise to student efforts. Make a commitment to show you enjoy communicating with them in English!
- Build lessons around content related to students' experience Use the "Goldilocks Approach" to lesson design: the lesson is not too easy; not too hard, but "just right" (to be engaging and give that sense of progress!).
- Provide sufficient (well-structured) practice. Students will never complain about having more time to practice.
- Review, review, review. No one ever learns everything the first time. Review builds both learner confidence and dependable language use habits.