Language training and settlement success: are they related?
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Teacher Researcher: Vicki Hambling
Northern AMEP Consortium
Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE

WE WANT TO SPEAK
Students
We want to speak in our daily life
This was the constant message but what does it mean? Responses ranged from:

A long, long list of everyday activities
to

“I want to know how I can get my husband to change his mind!”

The Impact on the Teacher

• Story of my professional journey
• The impact of the action research continued
• Opened a professional discussion
Class Profile

- 15 students Certificate 1 high
- Youngest 17 oldest 74
- 0 years of education - PHD
- 3 Arabic speakers
- 1 Chin Burmese
- 1 Russian
- 1 Guinean
- 9 Chinese
- 4 students with literacy issues
- 11 students with difficulty speaking

Course – content focused

Understanding the AMEP – Day/Evening/community/youth
HTS
DL
Child Care
Fee Free Translation

Understanding NMIT and services
- induction tours, reading brochures, filling forms, asking for information, asking questions, telephoning,
- student services and making an appointment to see a counsellor, library, the bookshop, recreation centre and gym, the restaurant, hairdressing, booking a massage, the canteen, enquiring at information, using student diary

Settlement Issues – beach safety, ambulance etc
Model – teacher controlled

Learners over the last decade:
  - Low literacy/high oracy students
  - Recounts – springboard to give important information
  - Reading the recount out aloud – speaking
  - Check comprehension
  - Grammar, punctuation,
  - Highly structured, well scaffolded
  - Read brochure about hours of opening etc authentic
  - Talk to the librarian authentic
CSWE tests related to familiar content

The Message

Happy with the teachers but classes not meeting their needs
*We want to be able to talk in our daily life.*
Increased opportunities for speech

- Repeat after the teacher
- Chanting
- Singing
- Information gap
- Surveys
- Pair dictation
- Conversation with teacher
- Conversation with volunteers
- The silent Way

Not enough
- **Big Question** How do we help students to speak?
- Complained about memory

Memory

- Activities which use all the senses - Mime, action, chanting, clapping, role playing, walking around the campus, excursions
- Oral recycling of the language endlessly
- Verbalised everything
- Students as teacher
- Discussed time it takes to move something from short term memory to long term memory
The Message

We want to speak

Learning how to learn module

- Students couldn’t answer the question what makes someone a good language leaner.
- Do we gloss over this in class assuming all students understand it?
- Used interpreters - Discussed how to study
- Borrowed books and CD’s from library
- Read aloud at home strategy
- How can students help themselves to learn English?
The Message

We want to speak

Student Isolation

- Opportunities to speak English are limited.
- In some cases the only place they spoke English was at school.
- Inform students of everything going on that’s free.
- Get them out into the community using the language
- Put them into pairs and sent them off
- Seniors Cards
- Internet, event Programs
- Map reading Diary work
- Information Gap
The Message

We want to speak

The Awakening

It’s more than providing the opportunity to speak.
Teach Pronunciation

- How to make the sounds
- Lips, tongue, teeth, mirrors, tissues, rubber bands
- Voiced and voiceless
- Schwa
- Syllables and silent syllables
- Stress and rhythm and intonation
- Rules about pronunciation
- Spell it like this pronounce it like this
- Rapid speech - Linking

Success

- Students were happy
- Gave them a voice
- Ex students and their friends drop in to the class.
English for Daily Life

- Often students didn’t seem to recognise that they were using English
- Example of going shopping, where they don’t say much. Do you read the labels? Yes
- Can you buy a ticket for the train? Yes
- Can you make an appointment to see the doctor? Yes
- But they are also asking for pronunciation.

Observations

- Need to be careful what we select as our topics as it slows the class down
- When we recycle we need to recycle vocabulary, phrases, students need to know.
- Need to give students the language to provide feedback
- Need to teach students to take pronunciation notes
  - to mark the syllables
  - to mark the stress
Settlement information

This presents a dilemma.

There is a huge amount of information that newcomers to Australia need and there has been a push for content driven language teaching at all levels.

This complicates the role of the teacher.

Does settlement information need to be delivered separately?

What strategies can we use to ensure students get important information?

Points to consider

- What modules are we enrolling students in?
- How do we integrate pronunciation and speaking into what we are already doing?
- How do we support staff?
  eg marking syllables- wash,ing or wa,shing
- If we expand the time we give to speaking what effect will that have on the other macro skills and the amount of settlement content we can deliver?
- Youth classes – students speak by speaking (YAMEC)
Thank You

- DIAC
- AMEP Research Centre
- NAMEP
- NMIT