
A practical guide to connecting and creating genuine engagement with your multicultural learners

Webinar handout

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Introduction

There are two different types of communication models; transmission and transactional. The first is the transmission model which can be described as tossing a ball (your message) at someone and walking away. It doesn't take in to account the complexities of language, semantics and perceptual filters. This is where the second model comes in; the transactional model.

This model takes certain factors into account regarding these perceptual filters each individual has, and includes age, race, gender, family background, religion etc. It explains that communication occurs when individuals create meaning together and is also affected by the relationship between the people in the conversation. Our unique understanding of a message from another person is based on the exact words being used, as well as the connotations and expressions chosen. In our classrooms, English is not the students' first language, and the more people in the conversations grow the complexity and possibility for miscommunication to occur.

It's important for teachers to learn about these because it helps you understand the reason why miscommunication occurs.

Common errors

There are many common errors in the classrooms made by both teachers and students. These may include misuse of target language, poor instructions, cultural conflict, grouping errors and the possibility to offend fellow students due to a lack of awareness or sufficient language. Here is some advice on resolving typical multicultural missteps in the classroom. You could use a needs analysis for all new students in your class, make sure you understand any current political situations that are occurring your students' country, and allow students to create presentations about their country or culture as a way to introduce this to fellow students.

Practical tools

Here are our top 3 practical tools to encourage meaningful engagement.

- i. Contributions and expectations
- ii. Stop Start Continue
- iii. Active Listening

Learn more

Do you want to learn more about connecting with multicultural learners? Here are some resources for you to read and watch:

1. Here is a short video to watch about active-listening in the workplace, followed by five slides to read through: <https://insights.cgma.org/story/lifelong-learning-and-cpd/page/4/1>
2. Watch this short video by TED called How miscommunication happens (and how to avoid it) <https://youtu.be/gCfzeONu3Mo?si=cPYKEG-KyICgrVIH>

Do your learners need to work on their active listening? Here are some resources that could help you.

1. Three activities for secondary learners at level B1. The activities are *Dual Dictation*, *Class Memory Quiz*, and *Listen for Lies*. <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-resources/teaching-secondary/activities/intermediate-b1/active-listening-activities>
2. A lesson for older teenagers or adult learners at B2 level. It aims to raise awareness of the importance of active listening skills, and to teach some language and techniques for active listening, including effective use of body language. The lesson task is to actively listen to a friend or colleague talking about a difficult experience.
 - <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-resources/teaching-adults/english-business/socialising-4-active-listening>

A recording of Amy's webinar can be watched here: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/news-and-events/webinars/webinars-teachers/multilingual-matters-mini-event>