Implementing CETA in multi-level ESL classes: Three viewpoints

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Introduction

• How did the initial idea for CETA emerge? (Tommie)
  The story.

• What is CETA? (Reagan)
  Community ESL Teaching Assistants

The first view: university faculty member

Establishing the foundation

• Writing grant proposals and obtaining funding
• Setting up the account; getting access to the funding
• Hiring a graduate student mentor
• Branding
• Creating the mission statement
• Recruiting prospective students who might become volunteers: initial list
The first view: university faculty member

Establishing the foundation
The mission statement:
• University volunteers get career development opportunities through hands on experience in ESL classes
• Adult School ESL teachers can teach more effectively with help from volunteers
• Adult School students can improve in their ESL skills.

Establishing the foundation
Over time CETA may serve the greater good of the community

Since most Fresno Adult School ESL students are women and many are parents of Fresno Unified students, improvement in these women’s education could over time have a positive impact on their children’s educational outcomes. Research indicates that mothers’ education has a major impact of their children.

Public Relations: Get the word out about CETA
• Press release published on a university website
• Film on Department Facebook page
• Celebration at Adult School

Meeting administrative needs with guidance from the Adult School Principal and Vice-Principal:
We needed to follow "rules":
• An MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)
• Volunteers need to be fingerprinted. Who will pay for that?
• Volunteer attendance needs to be recorded. A procedure is needed.

We developed a rough timeline based on when Adult School Classes start and end.
The first view: university faculty member

Meeting / workshop with Adult School teachers
Focus: beginning/low intermediate reading & vocabulary development
Brainstorming: Teachers’ ideas listed on how they might use volunteers
Workshop: why, what (materials), and how (lesson ideas volunteers might use)
Sample topic:
Adult School ESL theme: pharmacy.
• Workshop 1: included teachers brainstorming beginning level story ideas with pharmacy theme
• Workshop 2: I presented the story with vocabulary picture card support based on input from the teachers

The first view: university faculty member

Second Part of Beginning of the Semester Meeting / workshop for student volunteers
Focus: beginning/low intermediate reading & vocabulary development
Show the List: Teachers’ ideas on how they might use volunteers
Workshop: why, what (materials), and how (lesson ideas volunteers might use)
1. How to use TPR storytelling to build vocabulary and comprehension of stories with story parts that are repeated. (vocabulary from 1st 2,000 words)
2. How to “teach” family literacy stories: vocabulary & predicting, the story, post-reading tasks.
3. Use of publishers’ materials:
   • How to use graded readers (we just have a few of them)
   • Intermediate /low advanced chapter book (we have two class sets)

The second view: Graduate student mentor

Last year’s project outcomes:
• 14 volunteers getting hands-on experience
• Each volunteer volunteered from 2 - 6hrs/wk
• 10 locations- main campus + 10 satellite sites
• 25 students per class
• Recently arrived refugee group
• Approximately 250 ESL students affected

The second view: Graduate student mentor

Professional development
• Project management: overall timeline
• Coordination of volunteers: recruitment & communication
• Public relations: communications director, university attention
• Celebration & fundraising: outreach to community
• Event organization: fundraiser celebration components
The second view: Graduate student mentor

**Professional development cont.**
- Planning & running meetings
- Intro to project
- Volunteer responsibility training
- Procedures
- Timeline

**Additional Showcasing of the project**
- President’s Showcase of Excellence
- Campus competition
- Poster talk at regional CATESOL

The third view: Adult School faculty leader

**Adult School**
- ESL Students-first language backgrounds, gender, educational background
- Location of classes

**The third view: Adult School faculty leader**
- Overall ESL program: number of levels and multilevel classes
- Contact hours and days of instruction for each class
The third view: Adult School faculty leader

**Teachers’ challenges**

- So many students in each class
- Some multilevel
- Keeping everyone engaged
- Materials and lesson planning

**Teachers’ advantages of having volunteers**

- Volunteers’ input
- Volunteers’ can use tasks in classes introduced in the training
- When volunteers teach the entire class for part of the hour, teachers have time to watch observe their students’ work.