Co-constructing Classroom Agreements

CATESOL 2017
October 20, 2017
Santa Clara, CA

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Opening

1. Turn to a human being near you (assuming there are at least 2 people here this morning!)
2. Introduce yourself however you see fit
3. In 1 short minute, tell your new friend your 1st **Day Philosophy**. In your opinion, what should or should not be done? What do you typically do?
Positioning

Research Interests Relevant to this Today’s Topic
• Sociocultural theories of SLA
• Critical English language instruction
• Non-classroom learning spaces

Formative Educational Experiences
• BA English Literature & Theatre Arts, Santa Clara University (Learner)
• MA TESOL, University of San Francisco (Learner)
• Fulbright ETA Grantee, Universidad de Cartagena, Colombia (Teacher & Learner)
• PhD Student at the University of California, Davis (Learner & Teacher)
Co-creating classroom agreements: Why

Sociocultural Language Learning – All language learning is “socially organized and embedded in cultural meaning systems” which are “inherently social, cultural, and political...” (Watson-Gegeo, 2004, pg. 340)

Critical Language Power – “…there are no relations without power, and thus any dialogue reproduces relations of power and may be seen as ideologically normalized” (Pennycook, 2001, pg. 338).

Re-positioning & Empowering – One goal is to foster students’ “emerging awareness of critical issues, including their own status and positioning, thus enabling them to break down boundaries and re-distribute power relations among themselves” (Hawkins & Norton, 2009, pg. 4).”
1. Work with a partner.
2. Read over the expectations I’ve made for myself, and then **edit and/or add** anything that you think may be missing.
3. Then, talk to your partner and write down 2-3 items for “What can Jeff expect of you?”
4. Then, talk to your partner and write down 2-3 items for “What can you expect from each other?”
5. Take your time and really think through this with your partner.

**Note:** See “Example” PDF uploaded to CATESOL 2017 website
“I like this class, and the teacher because he gives us everything we want in our course and makes the class happy and let us as students to share our opinion. What a great class to be!”

– L1 Amharic
Anecdotal: Student Evaluations (LIN 001Y)

“...he communicated with the class and created conversation, it made section much more enjoyable”

– L1 English

“He listened to us when we had concerns...”

– L1 English
Anecdotal: Student Evaluations (LIN/CMN 005)

“I feel really inspired to apply your teaching techniques with my future students.”
– L1 Spanish

I liked the engaging way Jeff talks and involves us. I appreciated him doing the class rules at the beginning and it really set us up for a great experience with all that transparency.”
– L1 English

“...extremely fair...”
– L1 Mandarin
Anecdote: Personal E-mail (LIN 106)

“Hi Jeff!

I’m currently a member of your ENL 106 section... I am e-mailing to let you know I will be late to the section today due to transportation difficulties (I can explain after class if you’d like) and will most likely get there around 9:30.

We made class commitments last class and punctuality was one of them. It won’t happen again, and I hope to see you soon!”

– LI English
Co-creating classroom agreements: Suggestions

**Activate** different ways of knowing, learning, and using language on day 1

**Defer** to the students’ request as much as humanly possible

**Sustain** the agreements as a “*living document*”

**Refer** to the agreements throughout the quarter/semester

**Survey** the agreements at the end of the quarter/semester
leap and the net will appear

(zen saying)
References


