Shaping Empowerment: Negotiating Questionaires & Feedback in EFL Classroom

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to empower..

v. [T] to give someone the confidence, power, or right to do something.

Help students and teachers **identify & define goals.**

Foster & shape learner **engagement, autonomy & confidence** via infomed learning.

**Reassure & inform** teachers & students

**Are inclusive:** They allow all voices to be heard.

**Provide** teachers & students with a **tool** to **discuss** the **how** and **why** of teaching & learning, **create collaborative reflection and exploration** about classrooms to empower all participants.
First, let’s look at…

• ...**underlying theory** and research connected to questionnaires regarding **socio-cultural contexts**, **learner autonomy**, **collaborative learning**, **multifunctional syllabus design**, & the **positive power of anonymity**.

• And…

• ...**how the Design sector** may inspire us to approach courses, with a **healthy** dose of **experimentation** to look at our contexts from an **alternative point of view**.
As well as consider...

- questionnaire content, wording examples, quantity & frequency
- response scale types
- questionnaire language: statements, questions, L1, L2, or both?
- paper or electronic outlets
- Modalities for & impact of feedback about results
Research & Literature

- **Sociocultural Approach**: (Bialystock & Hakuta) = Sociocultural approach to learning contexts leads to “collaborative construction of meaning...” & is more authentic.

- **Ananyeva** (Indiana University of Pennsylvania) cites Belcher: “...the complexity of the notion of needs in ESL contexts...” She also cites Holme & Chalauisaeng: to conduct their needs assessment for 39 Pharmacology students at a university in Thailand doing an English reading course, they employed “…brainstorming, problem solving, journal writing, observations, and questionnaires...” with their students.

- **Richards’ Multi-functional syllabus design**: makes space for “affect cultivation – confidence building, motivation, and interest, learning strategies, thinking skills, interpersonal skills, and cultural understanding.”

- **Nunan’s Autonomous Learner Model**: informed learning: guiding students to self-guage & percieve needs, likes, hopes for learning, in and out of the classroom.

- **Penny Ur**: surveys for adolescent student preferences: 1) prepare, 2) distribute, 3) summarize results, 4) draw conclusions with colleagues, admin...
INSPIRATION ALSO COMES FROM...

- Design Thinking (Keley & Brown at Stanford University’s D School): Must understand ergonomics, as well as the context and culture in which objects/tools will be used, designed & tested by multipurpose teams.

- Elise Roy’s “Build better solutions by designing for those with disabilities.” TED talk March 2016: Emphathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, Test - It’s a flexible system.

- The power of anonymity (2015 OECD findings) in secondary school evaluation, esp. for boys who benefit from it in testing.
Objectives

- **What** do I want to accomplish with a questionnaire?

1) At the **beginning of a course**: Gather student preferences about learning styles, materials, methods & goals.

   - Group, pair, or **individual** work? **Homework** (flipped, self-corrected, amount of time for...).

2) **Mid-course ‘check up’**: Learner ownership of goals/effort; have new goals come up since the beginning?

3) **End-of-course reflection**: Overall performance students, teacher(s) & future efforts to maintain learning.
Elements to consider

- **Length, language** (L1 or L2?). Wording: statements / questions

- **Pace** each segment (beginning, middle, end of course)

- **Feedback:** Class discussion, graph showing results, wordle...

- Offer students the **option** to respond anonymously, using their NL, or English

- **Leave space for free responses:** “Please use this space to add any other comments:____________”
Response Scales

- Response Scales - choose one so it’s easy for you to tally and for students to gauge.
- Some, a little, a lot, never
- very much agree, agree, undecided, disagree, totally disagree
- No...a little...good...best, %
- ‘How likely...?’ scale..(may be difficult for beginners)
- Always include space for Free response
A note about wording...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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| • “I” **statements** personalize the experience & invite students to reflect on themselves & context.  
• **Short and concise**  
• *I* ask questions when *I* don’t understand. (often, sometimes, never)  
• **Check to ensure answer scale logically flows from statement:**  
• *If I feel the level of instruction is too difficult, I will tell the teacher & ask for help.* (often, sometimes, never) | • Question type depends on answer scale.  
• If *yes / no* scale, no need to repeat “*Do you...?*” for each question. (not much response range)  
• “*How likely are you to...?*” more range *but* may be difficult for lower levels. *How often do you...?* is more accessible. |

**INSTRUCTIONS: Short & Concise:**  

• “Please evaluate the statements about how you think you learn best. You may respond anonymously. “
Questionnaire samples

Beginning of course:  no  a little  good  best

I like to learn by reading.
I like to learn by listening.
I like to learn by watching.
Using games is a good way to learn.
I like the teacher to let me find my errors.
I like the teacher to tell me all my errors.

Mid-course:  often  sometimes  never

I review the lessons.
I ask questions when I don’t understand.
I request examples when I don’t understand.
It’s OK if I make errors in class.
It’s OK for others to interrupt the lesson.
I have started my final project.

I would like to learn more about:  email writing  social media  _____
<table>
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<tr>
<th>no</th>
<th>a little</th>
<th>good</th>
<th>best</th>
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In this course, I feel...

...I have improved my English skills.
...I tried to speak more.
...I used a dictionary more.
...I understand more when people speak.
...in the future I will continue to study.

Please feel free to add any other comments about the course:

Content & wording may be adapted to your situation. They may change from course to course. It’s a flexible system.
Paper or Electronic?

- **Paper based** = immediate, 100% response rate, Ts can be on hand to clarify meaning of questions / statements.

- **End of course (paper)**: should you be in the room? Is it for you & the class, or the administration?

- **E-based** = not guaranteed 100% response rate, but provides students with total anonymity. Automatic tally. Privacy notice for Italian law?
Feedback

- **Written** – may be in the form of a blog post, or put on the class website.

- **Graphic representation** of answer tallies may help group to see responses

- **Oral – Whole group discussion** (sociocultural approach)

- How you give feedback depends on **time investment** & desire/need to **create a learning community** within the classroom; each context is different.
Positive Impact of Feedback
HOW ABOUT YOU?

- How might you use learning questionnaires to empower your students & classrooms?

Thank you for coming! (Bibliography follows)

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BIBLIOGRAPHY & LINKS


