

Shaping Empowerment:

**Negotiating Questionnaires & Feedback in EFL
Classroom**

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to empower..

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

Longman Dictionary of American English, Pearson Education Ltd. 2004



QUESTIONNAIRES...

- Help students and teachers **identify & define goals.**
- **Foster & shape** learner **engagement, autonomy & confidence** via informed 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...

Statements	Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I” statements personalize the experience & invite students to reflect on themselves & context.• Short and concise• <i>I ask questions when I don’t understand.</i> (often, sometimes, never)• Check to ensure answer scale logically flows from statement:• <i>If I feel the level of instruction is too difficult, I will tell the teacher & ask for help.</i> (often, sometimes, never)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Question type depends on answer scale.• If <i>yes / no</i> scale, no need to repeat <i>“Do you...?”</i> for each question. (not much response range)• <i>“How likely are you to...?”</i> more range but may be difficult for lower levels. <i>How often do you...?</i> is more accessible.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>INSTRUCTIONS: Short & Concise:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “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

Questionnaire Samples

	no	a little	good	best
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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