

Developing proposals for teaching English as an International Language: Questionnaire results

Overall issues

Proportions of a total of 90 students from a variety of countries enrolled on University of Warwick MA programmes (2002–3, 2003–4, 2007–8) who considered these issues important vs. not important (questionnaire data). The most important issue is underlined:

- inappropriateness of current conceptions of ‘standard English’ for teaching purposes [**54 vs 27**]
- inappropriateness of current ‘cultural contents’ of textbooks [**66 vs. 15**]
- over-privileging of native speaker teachers [**63 vs. 20**]
- inappropriate transfer of teaching methods (e.g denying use of L1) [**56 vs. 25**]

Some previous suggestions, with MA students’ responses (agree vs. disagree)

Proportions of the same total of 90 students who agreed vs. disagreed with these suggestions (questionnaire data). The most popular suggestions are underlined:

- need for a move away from native speaker standards of English (Kachru 1986, Jenkins 2000, Seidlhofer 2002) [**38 vs. 39**]
- need for revision of current standards (Modiano 1999), e.g. from US English to British English or from British English to US English, or from US or British English to a mixture of the two [**55 vs. 29**]
- encourage the acquisition of interaction strategies that will promote mutual understanding: ways of seeking clarification, establishing rapport, accommodating to diversity, etc. (McKay 2002) in order to ‘ensure intelligibility among the speakers of English’ (ibid.) [**87 vs. 0**]
- provide exposure to skilled L2 use by L2 users, via recordings (Cook 1999) [**75 vs. 7**]
- in learning materials, include more situations involving L2 users / learners; represent L2 users positively, as role models to emulate (Cook 1999) [**75 vs. 10**]
- increase status of non-native speaker teachers as appropriate (linguistic) role models for students (Medgyes 1994, Cook 1999) [**80 vs. 8**]
- expose students to broader range of accents / Englishes in listening materials (Trifonovitch 1981, Modiano 2000) [**79 vs. 10**]
- provide students with information about different varieties of English (Modiano 2000) [**80 vs. 8**]

- develop awareness of a greater variety of cultures (including beyond the native English-speaking world) (Trifonovitch 1981) [**73 vs. 15**]
- promote the use of source culture content, as a basis for developing a ‘sphere of interculturality’, in which students learn about other cultures in relation to their own (McKay 2002) [**77 vs. 9**]
- approach all cultural content reflectively: consider why the topic was chosen, how it is written about, and what other ways it could have been presented. (McKay 2002) [**76 vs. 8**]
- Use teaching methods that acknowledge the students’ L1 (Cook 1999, Canagarajah 1999b) [**74 vs. 13**]
- develop awareness of other languages and ability to distinguish between them, as a basis for acceptance of different varieties of English (Trifonovitch 1981) [**72 vs. 16**]
- as to performance, focus on clarity in cross-cultural communicative settings more than near-native proficiency in a prestige variety (Modiano 2000) [**76 vs. 8**]
- make use of the language generated by students, in speech work or writing, as the driving force behind classroom activities (Prodromou 1997b) [**70 vs. 15**]
- encourage student experimentation (in writing) with the grammatical and discourse system of English, e.g. construction of hybrid texts (Canagarajah 1999b) [**59 vs. 27**]

References

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