What 3 things have I learned from the lessons? What 2 things am I still curious about? What is one thing that I can use my new knowledge?

Adult Learners in English

The age of the students is the major deciding factor on how we teach them and what we ask them to do. People of different ages have different needs, competencies, and cognitive skills.

Categories of Adult ESL:

* Immigrants who left their native countries because of various push-pull factors;
* Migrant workers who left their native countries for low-skilled work;
* Refugees who left their homes because of religious/ethnic persecution, political upheaval, or war.

Motivation of adult learners:

* To find jobs, keep jobs, or find better jobs. (acknowledging that those who are proficient in English can earn higher wages than those who are not)
* Personal reasons (enjoyment, bettering themselves, or improving overall proficiency for communication)
* To help their children with homework, make friends, or obtain medical information
* To earn diplomas

There are differences between

Adult learners vs. young learners:

1. They are cognitively mature

Disadvantages in learning the sound system and oral skills. Learners who immigrate after puberty may have difficulties speaking without a foreign accent since they already established their native tongue/accent.

1. They may face more illness
2. They are self-directing
3. They have focused career paths
4. They are psychologically vulnerable
5. They are motivated to learn to obtain employment
6. They are obliged to keep up with new and unpredictable developments in their complex environments
7. They can engage with abstract thought
8. They often have a clear understanding of why they are learning and what they want to get out of it.
9. Tend to more disciplined than other age groups

3 paradigms of Adult Literacy

Functional Literacy – more associated with capitalist orientation. Helps learners obtain work so they can support themselves. Advocates of this model believed that contextualized instruction that teaches basic skills applied to occupational tasks produces the best results

Critical literacy – is more associated with socialist orientation in that it helps learners solve social problems. It educates individuals to bring about social justice. Empowering learners to change systems that are not serving them. “Students to the curriculum”

New Literacy Studies (NLS) – represent a compromise between a functional and critical approach to curriculum. Literacy is a set of practices within certain cultures and constructed relative to the needs and goals of the community. A constructive approach.

Sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic factors heavily influenced what kind of literacy is needed and how a learner can become a member of a particular field of knowledge. For example, if the goal is to obtain a job, NLS suggests that the functional literacy curriculum might be appropriate since this curriculum focuses on the skills and competencies needed that are seen in the workplace.

Classroom Applications

* Needs assessment and tailoring instruction to learners’ needs and interests are important.
* Address students’ different learning styles.
* The adult education teacher also needs to have a good understanding of culture.

Being Teachers

* Teachers know things that students don’t,
* They can motivate students,
* They can provide incentive,
* They can help the students pinpoint errors and target their weaknesses

Grammar-translation approach