ESOL for the Home Health Aide (HHA) Career

First Literacy Lab Project
Mujeres Unidas Avanzando
Dorchester, MA
2017-2018
Who We Are

- Adult Basic Education Center for women in Dorchester
- Started in 1979
- Two main programs: ESOL (3 levels) and Hi-SET Exam Preparation (in Spanish)
- We also offer: Computer Training classes, Healthcare Trainings (HHA and Phlebotomy), social services, on-site child care, career coaching, workshops, etc.
Our Students

- Immigrant women
- Majority Hispanic
- Majority low-income
- Majority mothers (Many, single mothers)
- Most in the 20-50 year age range; Some younger, some older!
HHA at MUA

- In partnership with:
  - Since 2016
  - Main intention: Help our students take the next steps after improving their English skills and/or receiving their high school equivalency
  - Typically offer two fifteen-week cycles each year (Fall and Spring) and an intensive Summer session
  - Requirements to enroll: *At least* high-intermediate level of English; U.S. work authorization; high school diploma or equivalency; at least 18 years old
  - Very popular:
    - Many of our students already have healthcare education or work experience from home countries and want to get back into the field in the U.S.
    - Huge industry in MA, so many job prospects for students after finishing the training
    - Home Health Aide = flexible hours for working moms
  - Most enrolled students from our other MUA programs;
    - Some outside referrals
Our Literacy Lab Intentions

Initially...

● An ESOL course that would run in conjunction with the HHA class

● Target population: The students that met the requirements for the HHA class, but that would still benefit from additional English support for the dense language used in the class; e.g., Textbook reading, extensive vocabulary, lecture-based instruction (typically with a teacher that knows little to no Spanish)

● This “ESOL for HHA” class would be held twice a week, in the mornings before the HHA class in the afternoon for any currently-enrolled HHA students that needed or wanted this additional English instruction

● Intended for Level 2/3 students (SPL 3-6)
The Original Curriculum

- Created in tandem with the textbook:

- Intentionally flexible, with the idea that the ESOL teacher (our AmeriCorps service member) would collaborate with the HHA teacher to keep both classes progressing at roughly the same pace.

- One of the main focuses: **Field-Specific Vocabulary**, directly from the textbook.

- Each class was to include: “warm-up” vocabulary drills, review quizzes, and a chance for students to ask about words from the reading that they were unsure of.

- **Sample vocabulary list from Chapter 2:**
  allowed/not allowed; compassionate; empathy; sympathy; honest; tactful; conscientious; dependable; respectful; unprejudiced; tolerant; scope of practice; liability; grooming habits; delegation.
The rest of the class time: Focus on relevant grammar and language skills

**Sample lesson ideas:**
- Describe symptoms and health conditions using sense verbs (feels like, looks like, smells like…)
- Role-playing 911 calls
- “Simon Says” to practice vocabulary for parts of the body; common medical imperatives (bend your knee, touch your toes…)
- Converting metric system measurements to U.S. symptoms and relevant vocabulary
- Using transition words in speaking and writing to explain a procedure
Set-Backs and Learning Opportunities

- Registration for the Fall 2017 HHA class: Many interested, qualified applicants; We filled the class quickly
- But none were in need of additional language support!
- All registered students: Either ELLs already at a high SPL, or native English speakers from the community
- No one expressed any need or interest in supplemental English instruction
- This semester’s teacher was also only available on Saturdays, so the back-to-back scheduling was no longer an option
Adjustments

- So, it was back to the drawing board. The changes we made included:
  - Class became a precursor rather than a supplement
  - Level of instruction was changed to accommodate our Level 1 students (SPL 0-3)
  - Class schedule changed to match the rest of our ESOL classes: Monday – Thursday, 10 hours per week
  - Intended population: Students that would like to take HHA later or work in healthcare in another capacity, but were not yet ready
  - New curriculum: No longer in accordance with the HHA textbook or HHA class timetable
  - Class scope: a “regular” Level 1 ESOL class (incorporating the grammar and language skills from our existing Level 1 ESOL Scope & Sequence), but with a healthcare focus

- Goal: Students who finished this course would then receive priority registration for future semesters of HHA (a good incentive, as this class typically has a waiting list)
Lesson Sample #1

Lesson: Treating Exterior Injuries

Cloze Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>hurt/hurts</th>
<th>cut</th>
<th>fell</th>
<th>stitches</th>
<th>cream</th>
<th>wash</th>
<th>rash</th>
<th>Band-Aid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Doctor: Can you tell me what ________________?
Woman: My head hurts.
Doctor: What happened?
Woman: I hit it on the table when I ____________________.
Doctor: Okay. I’m going to look at it.
Woman: Is there a ________________?
Doctor: Yes, there is a cut.
Woman: Will I need _____________?
Doctor: No, I do not think you will need _________________. We will put some antibacterial _______________ and some bandages on it.
Woman: Thank you, Doctor.

Child: Mommy, I have a boo-boo.
Mom: What happened?
Child: I was running and I scraped my knee.
Mom: Let me see. We’ll ___________ the dirt out with water and put on a _________________.
Child: Mommy, it _________________.
Mom: I know but it’ll stop soon. Would you like a lollipop?
Child: Yes! 😊
## Lesson Sample #2
Lesson: First Aid & Treatments Vocabulary

### First Aid Information Gap

**Student A**
Rachel has a rash. How should she treat it?
Will has a little burn on his finger. How should he treat it?
George has a splinter in his toe. How should he treat it?
Alice broke her foot. How should she treat it?

**Student B**
Rachel has a small cut on her hand. How should she treat it?
Will has a big cut on his arm. How should he treat it?
George has a bruise on his shoulder. How should he treat it?
Alice has a fever. How should she treat it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Aid Information Gap</th>
<th>Alice</th>
<th>George</th>
<th>Will</th>
<th>Rachel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cast</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stitches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Band-Aid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ointment (Cream)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cold Water</td>
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<td>Ice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tweezers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pill(s)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lesson Sample #3 (The Crowd Favorite)

Lesson: Injuries and Past Tense

Warm-Up: “Old MacDonald” Remix
In the past ____ had an injury / EIEIO
And on that day she broke her toe / EIEIO
With an “ouch ouch” here and an “ouch ouch” there
Here an “ouch” there an “ouch” / Everywhere an “ouch ouch”
On that day she broke her toe / EIEIO

In the past ____ had an injury / EIEIO
And on that day I burned my hand
And on that day he scraped his knee
And on that day you bruised your hip
Results

- This “ESOL for HHA” class started in January with 14 students; 10 completed the class in May.
- Our next HHA session started in March; **2 from this ESOL group registered and completed the HHA training** (They also expressed an interest in our new Phlebotomy training this fall).
- 2 other students felt more comfortable waiting for a later session this school year but do plan to take the training.
- All enrolled students demonstrated improvements in English (re: pre-/post-BEST Plus testing; in-class assessments).
- 5 of these students have continued studying ESOL at MUA this year; 3 moved on to Level 2.
- Of the students that did not express an interest in a healthcare career or training course: They were still satisfied with the course and its content due to its relevance to daily life, their parenting responsibilities, etc. (re: Student feedback surveys).
Student Anecdotes

From a student that enrolled in the Saturday Home Health Aide course in March (paraphrased):

It was difficult because the teacher talked quickly and the majority of the other students were able to keep up. But we [the 2 from this ESOL group] could pick out some vocabulary from the weekly ESOL class during the HHA lectures, which helped us understand the teacher better and also increased our confidence.
Looking Forward

- **HHA is still going strong! 😊**

- Through the same partnerships, we were able to also add a Phlebotomy training course which started this October.

- Again, our applicant pool for both classes was a good mix of MUA graduates and other members of the community; all at varying English proficiency levels but mostly strong enough to go right into these classes.

- A few needed another few months of English first, though, and while they’re not in a class specifically designated as “ESOL for HHA” this year, all of our levels do include a health and wellness unit with the vocabulary and conversation skills necessary for this profession; We have assured them they will have a spot in the training programs once they are ready.
For More Information

- The full curriculum from this project can be found at https://firstliteracy.org/resources/for-educators/. Scroll down to First Literacy Lab 2018 Project Presentation Resources, then select this project.

- I can be reached at: 617-282-8200 or cjshalvey17@gmail.com.
We would like to extend a very sincere thank you to First Literacy for their support. Without their funding, this project would not have been possible.

And, thank you for your attention!