

Responding to Learner's Needs

Based on the current educational theories, which focuses on personalizing the learning experience to achieve meaningful learning, Dr. Ahmed Abdelwahab discusses the four components that influence the learning environment: the teacher, the learner, the content, and the instructional methods with the last two combined together.

Beginning with the teacher, the presenter shares the result of a survey he conducted, asking students to finish the following sentence, "A good teacher to me is the one who" The results were amazing because they did not reflect what teachers would think matter the most to students like grades and make up tests and exams. On the contrary they focused on the teacher's personality and relationship with students including: making learning fun, respectful, fair, helpful, and knows the weaknesses and strengths of students.

Secondly, learners have different learning styles, multiple intelligences, different backgrounds, personal differences, and different social and emotional developments. Good teachers should be able to identify and accommodate these differences in their planning, teaching, and assessment.

The content and instructional methods are so connected that is difficult to separate. So, Dr. Mohammed presents them together and lists the following instructional methods that lend themselves for learner's needs: learner-centered approaches, cooperative learning, discussions boards, case studies, discovery learning, graphic organizers, journals, K-W-L chart, learning centers, role-play, scaffolding, problem solving, simulations, and storytelling.

The purpose of this session is to put learner centered philosophies into action through implementing the instructional activities presented under content and methods. Dr. Mohammad reports, "The more these types of activities are used, the better the chance for student achievement and inspiration of more effective strategies for meaningful learning."