Teaching Philosophy

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I view teaching as an opportunity to empower the next generation of global thinkers and doers to become self-sufficient learners. Consequently, teachers are responsible for creating an environment where students can develop a capacity to analyze international and intercultural challenges through communication and collaboration, essential skills in our increasingly interconnected world. It is, therefore, crucial that our students learn that this interconnectedness instigates a need for world citizens to bridge language barriers by becoming proficient in English, the *lingua franca* of the world.

However, before teaching these ideas to students, it is necessary that teachers first understand what motivates students to learn English in the first place; it is also imperative that teachers recognize the differences in how people learn and implement a language assessment that aligns with these differences. Lastly, teachers should also look for ways to improve as teachers.

Motivation

Students have different motivations to learn English. Therefore, they improve when their study content is meaningful to their lives and experiences and when learners actively participate in the learning process. For example, sometimes students are extrinsically motivated to learn either because it is a required course or to pass an English proficiency exam, other times students exhibit integrative motivation from a desire to live and study abroad, and yet there are instances when they already have a passion from within, or they see English as a tool.

Individual Differences

These different motivations highlight having unique experiences, desires, and expectations. Understanding that these individual differences exist among our students can prepare teachers to provide an appropriate learning environment where students can express and develop their learning potential in a relaxed and creative way. Teachers must also understand that motivation to learn English sometimes can change, so we should adjust our teaching techniques to cope with these changes.

Positive Learning Environment

Understanding students' motivation and individual differences help foster a positive learning environment in the classroom as students feel heard and understood. This feeling has the potential to establish trusting relationships between teachers and students. Once teachers and students can establish a connection, students feel confident expressing themselves and become self-motivated to continue learning even after we are no longer their teacher.

Language Assessment

Learning is a mutually shared responsibility between a teacher and a student; therefore, a teacher should take the time to learn the needs of students, and the student should take their time to demonstrate their English knowledge. Students can demonstrate their learning through the collaboration of a meaningful project portfolio. Using this type of formative assessment allows the teacher to monitor students' progress as it develops. It will enable the teacher to intervene and adapt the course if students struggle with specific language skills.

Teacher Improvement

Finally, an equally important element to a well-rounded teacher is the desire to improve one's teaching abilities. As teachers, we should constantly strive to be proactive by staying current with teaching strategies, either by reading journals or attending seminars. Teachers should also welcome administration and colleagues' advice when interpreting student evaluations and should not hesitate to adopt different teaching strategies should the student needs require them.