KN130-WD

03/19/16

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My Dream as a Teacher of English Learners

I have worked at a language institute of my university and a children’s welfare center as a teacher for several months. I was responsible for teaching middle school students English and taking care of elementary school students. I gave them assignments to do and explained if they had any question on grammar. Also, I got some of questions on mathematics in the children’s welfare center. While volunteering, I realized that, to be a teacher, the most important thing is to know the way of passing a message on to the students clearly and effectively and make them understand.

It took some time until I became aware of it, since I was not sure how to help them to understand certain concepts perfectly, even whether students have understood my explanation or not. Even though a teacher is well knowledgeable in English and mathematics, you cannot be assured that students have clearly understood his or her explanation.

Through these experiences, I found out that it is necessary to learn an organized and systematic process of teaching in order to make sure that I am on the right track as a future English teacher. This is the reason why I joined TESOL class 130 at California State University at Long Beach Times Media TESOL Center. My goal is to know the basic ways of educational approach and master effective teaching methods through this course. I want to improve self-confidence teaching others as well, which would turn me into a competent teacher. In doing so, I wish to grow up to be a teacher who motivates and inspires students, and can be their role model.

10 years later, I suppose that I am at high school teaching English. I am looking at the students in front of the class. Today’s topic is “Future Dream”. I tell them softly about my future dream that I had when I was in my 20s. The unemployment rate was so high and the companies were reducing the number of recruitment by the time I graduated University. Actually, I had no idea what I would do in the future until I graduated University. I went to United States and Spain to study abroad during college life, and learned English and Spanish with passion. This was because I liked learning language and it made me to be connected to other people speaking the target language. Then, I noticed the time passed so fast that I had already become a senior. I started to apply for the big, major companies in Korea just like other 4-year University graduates. Even though it was not what I have planned or expected, I had to do it just because others did. If I didn’t join the flow, it seemed like I was left behind from a normal route. However, it was not easy to go through this intense competition. In the meantime, I experienced volunteering. It blew my mind with confidence that it was really a pleasure and rewarding work to pass linguistic knowledge on to others. It was a moment that I decided that my future was to become an English teacher.

I group my students into four to talk about and share their future dreams. I tell them it is not what your parents want you to do but yourselves and do not care about others’ eyes. It is your dream and you are the owners of yourselves not others. You are the ones who are responsible for your lives. After a few minutes of discussion, I stop them and ask each group’s story. Some of them want to go to one of the biggest companies in Korea as most of the university students want. Also, there are student who want to be a teacher and nurse, to start their own business, etc. Still, the rest of them are not sure what they want to do. They have no future dream. I feel so much pity for them. I was one of them when I was a high school student.

However, I tell them it is not too late. Maybe it is because you have not experienced that much due to school study. What you need to do is experience as many as you can when you go to college thinking about what makes you happy and what inspires you. Maybe someone next to you might be so busy in studying hard in order to get the best GPA or meeting the basic elements to apply for the companies. But it is the only college life in your life and it will not be back again. I do not want you to spend your precious time on what others force you to do. Do what makes your heart flutter. What you need to do is to enjoy as much as you can and experience it in every possible way. For example, go to trip to famous or unknown areas in the world, learn anything you can, including language, sports and instruments or read a lot to catch up with news of the world. It is good idea to do the part time job to experience a bit of society as well. These experiences will bring value to your life and lead you to get ready for the future. They are the things you can do only in your college life as well. You will not have enough time or money to do them when you graduate, although you want to do, unfortunately. In doing so, you will be able to find out what you like and what you are willing to do.

The class is dismissed and one of the students in the class comes up to me that she has something to talk to me about. So I go to my office to give her some time. She wants to be a musician, that she can play a piano and even guitar. But her parents want her to be a lawyer instead of a musician. She was upset these days because of this situation. However, she decided to go through the long run of her future dream after my class. She says that she was deeply motivated by my speech that she is sure what she will do after graduation. She would like to experience in various fields.

By sharing our thoughts, we could understand each other. I am impressed that I can actually affect students’ future and feel great responsibility as well. I represent the future of students and they learn from me. I have no doubt I can be an inspiration for my students.