My Dream as a Teacher of English Learners’

K131N-WE Essay

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Course: 131th WE

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Due Date: March 21, 2016

On the first day of Times Media TESOL class, we read a story about a teacher who changed her attitude and ideas on education because of her student. She told the student that he was the one who taught her what a teacher could be and the importance of the teacher. She didn’t know how to teach until she met him.

While I was reading the story, I was thinking of teachers I had in the past. I could not think of any teachers that I liked. I had several bad memories about the teachers. Here is one anecdote why I hate mathematics. I totally gave up on mathematics when I was ten years old because of my 3rd grade homeroom teacher. Whenever we got lower than 90 on a math quiz, he smacked us. I could not ask any questions even though I did not understand something. I was so scared of the teacher.

After I looked back on my childhood for a brief moment, I also thought about all the students I taught and am teaching now. Was I a good teacher to them? Am I a good teacher now? I cannot answer that question at this moment. I am definitely a hard working teacher, but that does not mean I am an authentic teacher. All of sudden I had a feeling of insecurity. Have I ever made a student give up on English without knowing it? When I decided to take TESOL class, I just thought about learning good techniques of teaching English. However, after I reread Mrs. Thompson’s story, I realized that teaching is not only about good techniques.

Through this TESOL class, I would like to know what makes a good English teacher. I’ve been teaching English for more than ten years now without taking courses of Teaching English to speakers of other language. I felt ashamed. I majored in Early Childhood Education, so I know how to treat children and fulfill their needs. In English class, I can tell the students’ feelings about learning other language. Many of them come to the class because their parents apply for the class and these students are not happy about that. However, I did not give them enough time to think and understand why they need to learn the language. I did not give them enough time to adjust to the new environment. I just started my lesson right away.

I also want to learn how to create a worry-free classroom environment. Students should feel secure and comfortable in the classroom before they actually participate in lessons. They should feel good to be in the classroom. They should not worry about making mistakes. I always tell my students that they learn from their mistakes and it is okay to make lots of mistakes. On the other hand, when they failed a test, I criticized their mistakes and blamed it on them. I worried more about parents’ reaction to the test than my students’ self-esteem.

Lastly, I want to learn appropriate teaching techniques of the 4 skills of language: reading, listening, speaking and writing. I want my students to communicate well in English since they are spending quite long time to study English. It is my duty to guide them well. All the middle school to college students in Korea study English for many years, but many of them do not want to engage in English communication situations. Learning language is not only about reading, taking tests or earning more money in our society. We learn other language so that we can have better understanding of their culture and ideas, and also share their thoughts.

What kind of teacher will I be in 10 years? What kind of teacher should I be? Here is the list of the qualifications I will have in ten years and I will put an effort to meet the requirements.

1. I will make my students feel welcomed in the classroom and at school. When they enter the class, greet them with smile and have a chat about their day and my day. I will make a positive learning atmosphere.
2. I will give my students enough time to adapt themselves to new circumstances with fun English activities.
3. I will be patient. This is very difficult and not easy to follow because sometimes students can be annoying and test your temper. As a teacher and a grown up, we know we should not lose our temper. Even if a student disturbs the whole class and causes a lot of trouble, I will breathe deeply and explain the situation calmly. I might say it in a stern voice though.
4. I will be creative to make the lesson useful as well as interesting. If I still work for a franchise English academy in the future, I will have to follow its curriculum and teach the textbooks the school chooses. However, I will prepare my lesson plan well in advance and prepare materials for the students, not for the teacher’s convenience.
5. I will trust my students. Some students may need longer time to understand certain things, but they all have potential ability. I will believe in my students.
6. I will be fair to all my students.
7. I will be ready to learn from my students. Some teachers think they know everything or they must know everything. No one is too old to learn. Students can inspire me with their enthusiasm, originality, and a different perspective.
8. I will have a sense of humor.
9. I will respect my students. When I thought back on my school days, I was told to respect teachers and the grown-ups. There is an old proverb in Korea. It is said that a pupil must not step on his/her teacher’s shadow. I think only few teachers truly respect their students.
10. I will enjoy having classes with my students.

In conclusion, I will do my best to make my dream come true. I will become an authentic educator for English learners.