“My dream as a teacher of young English Learners”

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By studying at California State University Long Beach TESOL course, I would like to expand my thoughts on the great impact that teachers can have on students. Even though I attended the class only for two weeks, I started to realize that understanding about the theory and the teaching technique is a very small part of teaching language. Since all kinds of education that I’ve had in Korea were quite focused on behavioristic approach, I’ve had the thought that the important thing is to teach as efficient as possible with many advanced techniques when teaching language. However, I think there are much more things to be aware of when you teach language to young learners.

I also would like to expand my understanding on characteristics in children’s developmental stage by age and seek for the best way to teach English as they’ve learned their mother language. Pushing children to memorize grammar and vocabularies seems to be ineffective short-term approach. Indirect approach to elicit their inner thought and motivation would be much more effective if you focus on long-term study effect.

“Teaching” seems to be very familiar for anyone. Many people have certain educational experience to be taught for some period of time in their life although the kind of education would be diverse. However, not all of us have an experience of teaching. Teaching implies much more than just giving out knowledge and techniques.

It is very interesting that I have many friends and relatives whose job is teaching. For example, my husband is a professor in engineering department and my mother in a law was an elementary school teacher. My best friend from high school teaches math to high school students. Many people around me are related to teaching something and they always talk about how difficult it is to understand the difficulty of finding out what students cannot understand. They often say it’s hard to let students understand the knowledge that I usually take it for granted. As it is often said, knowing and teaching is a different thing. I’ve never seriously thought of how it is important to let people understand new knowledge which they are not familiar with. I have only been on the side of students, learning knowledge from teachers (English, Japanese, Business, Marketing, Sales, IT technologies, etc.). After having two kids, I started to have curiosity of teaching, because I have seen many kids are struggling with understanding on what their teachers and their mothers eager to teach.

My short-term goal as a teacher is to understand that every child’s learning journey is different from everyone else. Learning language environment in Korea is so much struggling that parents start to plan their language education when they are pregnant by listening to English songs(nursery rhymes, mother goose song.) The language journey starts from when they are fetus in mom’s body. Usually 5 years-old little kids get everyday homework to memorize many vocabularies and they become well-trained to take tests every time when they go to “Haakon”. They are too much exhausted with learning not only English but other subjects while they are unaware of the essential reason why they should study so. Inner motivation is the most important thing in learning. I would like to become a teacher who tries to find out the individual difference of students to drag out students’ inner strength of their motivation in learning.

My mid-term goal is to become a teacher who is more sophisticated in creating study plan for students by deep understanding on individual difference. I believe that a teacher who understands the individual difference correctly can plan student’s curriculum by their own to customize and maximize their learning performance. Especially when it comes to teach young learners, how it approaches seems to be more difficult than grownups, since you have to understand the process of their learning process is quite different. It is often told that children’s brain is just like a sponge that they can easily absorb something new very easily. It’s important to realize that every young learner has a huge potential of learning. By understanding the difference of teaching skills depending upon children’s developmental stage, I would like to develop my own teaching techniques considering the multiple intelligence theory. I would like to teach my students with fun and full of energy so that they can have more interest in learning new language. By involving them in many various activities such as art, mathematics, games in English, I would expect my students to build up confidence and passion for learning throughout experience.

My long-term goal as an English teacher to young learners is to let young learners to realize the importance of having language capability. Not just as a purpose of getting a good grade or an academic background, as a purpose of becoming more capable in your life when communicating in the world. By realizing the importance of language communication and comfort-zone when they are young, the person can be more motivated and stimulated by “The influentials” around them. The more you know, the more you understand the importance of language. However, if you don’t realize the importance, I would miss out all the chances and the significant moments throughout your life.

Teaching is both a science and an art. By understanding the both, I believe that as a teacher to young learners, I would be able to utilize the advantages of both scientific approaches in artistic and humanistic approaches for young learners in teaching English. By believing the surprising effect of experience in success, I would like to become a teacher who is like a partner who can assist to bring out my students individual strength. We often say basic belief on trust, consideration, being patient on your children is very important, and this belief will let your children develop their ability by themselves. I think teaching has similar attributes as when you take care of your children. I strongly believe that teachers’ seriousness in teaching and the strong belief on my students’ potential will lead to better results in teaching.