

## **Philosophy of Teaching**

Learning English as a foreign language can be challenging to many students at many different ages. I have studied English as a foreign language since I was seventh grade student. Throughout my life and career as a teacher, I still think learning English is very challenging. However, learning English is as beneficial as how challenging it is. Being able to speak multiple languages can serve as one of the strongest abilities that people can have when they grow up because that ability opens many doors to life in both career and private life.

Being bilingual teacher of English is very beneficial when teaching English to ESL students because the experience significantly helped me teach English at private school in Japan. I experienced the same hardships that students experienced when I learned English. I know how students feel when they first encounter English and I know how learning English can be a challenging task. I experienced it exactly the same way. For example, students that I taught had hard time distinguishing L sound and R sound, but I knew methodologies, such as using minimal pair exercises, and those methodologies helped students overcome pronunciation hardship.

My experience in teaching and tutoring ESL to students helped me build beliefs and ideas that help students overcome challenges and lead them to success in learning English. The elements that help students succeed in learning English are positive-atmosphere learning environment, motivating students, and role of the teacher.

## **Positive-Atmosphere Learning Environment**

Several students attend cram schools after school, but most students have input in classroom at school. Therefore, the classroom, learning environment, must be a place where students feel comfortable to absorb inputs. To make classroom comfortable, I told students advises, such as “It is necessary and totally fine to make mistakes” because students were afraid of making mistakes at beginning level. I hesitated to ask questions when I first studied English because I was afraid of what classmates think of me by asking questions. Students feel ashamed when they make mistakes in front of other classmates. However, those negative emotions prevent student’s progress in learning. To avoid this situation, I made activities that were tricky at the beginning level and purposely had students make mistakes and correct that mistake in class together to show that asking question and making mistake is a natural thing to do when people learn second languages. It was important to let students know that learning English is a challenging task and everybody will make mistakes. When students feel comfortable at learning, then they will absorb inputs better than when students are uncomfortable. This element leads to another element, which is motivating students.

## **Motivating Students**

There are many different reasons why students take foreign language courses. Students take course to fulfill requirements, for fun, and for future. I taught English at private school in Japan where English was the requirement course. Therefore, several students were not interested in English or did not pay attention. However, that was not anybody’s fault, but it was my responsibility to bring motivation in students because motivation helps students absorb input better. To do so, I came up with a activity that I

asked students to describe and introduce their favorite celebrities or singer to other classmates. In this activity, students were eager and they had fun creating sentences in English. I used this activity at beginning of the semester and it worked very well. Students found this activity very fun and students talked about their favorite dramas in English outside of class.

### **Role of the Teacher**

Teacher will be the closest figure that students have to absorb inputs. Teacher's role is to manage classroom and teacher is not the controller of the classroom, but facilitator. When I led the class at the beginning of a lesson, I introduced the agenda of the lesson first to let students know what was covered in that lesson and I introduced the material. After material is introduced and covered, I gave them activities to see if students understood the material and I managed the time for them to ask me questions. While students were working on the activities, I did not interfere because I did not want to interrupt their conversation or process of working. It is necessary to let students explore and experience working by themselves. When students made mistakes or had questions and they were minor, I corrected quietly. When students made common mistakes or common questions that ESL students make, I went over those with whole class together without spotting that student. I never picked one student or spot one because it would embarrass the student and take away their motivation.

English is a world language and many countries have English curriculum in their education systems. There are countries where English is spoken as one of the official language, but there are more countries that use English as a foreign language. In those countries students learn English because taking English class is a mandatory and required

course to graduate. It is one of the most common reasons to learn English in Asian countries, especially in Japan. My goal is to help students find pleasure and joy in learning English. With my philosophy of teaching, I am confident that I am ready to do so.