**My Life as a TESOL Certified English Communication Facilitator**

KN130 WD Final Essay Mina Kim

 Before making the decision to attend a TESOL course, I hoped that it could transform me into a competent teacher. My goal was gaining an adequate acquaintance with proper methodology in teaching English to help me deliver my perception of a proper teacher to English learners. Now, the eight-week course is almost at the end.

Every day I spent in the class has never passed by without internal screaming. Every task and assignment was a real burden on me. This course was literally faithful to methodologies, and it was very strange to me. I was brimming over with self-doubt because I had no experience in the teaching field. I had to struggle, but it was all worth it. It consolidated the original purpose of my new dream; to be an English teacher is to share all of my varied trials and errors, and to be of help to people who want to learn English. I became confident that my considerable understanding about learning English might quench students’ thirst for needs that I myself have had in my previous English classes. This TESOL class catered to all my needs, which included learning appropriate English educational methods. It taught me how to be an encourager and an adviser for each of my students as a competent English teacher. Even though there are a wide variety of teaching methods of English in the real world, what I am interested in is only to be a teacher who could truly improve students’ communication skills in English.

 First and foremost, I learned how to care about students. If I had not attended a TESOL course, I would not have known the systematic way to conduct it effectively. Through this course, I gained knowledge about what attitudes a teacher should have and show to students, how to grab students’ interest, how to get them involved in the activities, along with how to maximize the effect of English education. When I was an ESL student in New York, not all teachers were capable. Sometimes I complained about teachers because I thought their teaching style was just teacher-centered and seemed not to care about the students’ individual participating degree. While sitting in a student’s chair, I felt like I could’ve done better job than they did. However, since I started the TESOL course, it didn’t take me too long to realize there was very little I knew about teaching English, or planning and leading a class. I spent many sleepless nights trying to figure out what would be the best way to show my sincere care for each student. Now, I think I’m ready to share my life experiences in learning English with students and to be a good example for them to follow. I will be able to help them want to speak English, as opposed to feeling forced to speak English.

Learning languages should be pleasure. While attending a TESOL course, I was taught that every English lesson including speaking, reading, writing and grammar should be communicative. It reconfirmed to me that the final goal of learning English is to use English in communication. I’ve seen many students who have a fantastic score on various English tests but don’t know how to manage a 10-minute conversation with a native English speaker. As a trained and certified English communication facilitator, I learned how to teach the target languages in a way to improve communication skills. At the very least, there wouldn’t be a student who can read and write, but can’t speak English in my future classes. In addition to knowing how to speak, there is one more thing I would like to accomplish; that is what to speak.

Whenever I have a chance to be involved in conversations with Westerners, I feel their range of topics is very wide. If I had no interest in social issues or various subjects such as environment, art, human rights or politics, I would have trouble to taking part in a conversation. I also keep realizing that knowing how to express my thoughts or opinions is essential for communication. In the TESOL micro-teachings, I could ascertain that learning ‘live’ English through various topics related to everyday life is very important so as to use newly acquired knowledge in real life. If a teacher picks a topic that was academic or abstract, students get distracted very quickly. However, if the teacher picks the topic from newspapers, magazines, movie scripts, trends, or history, students get interested in it and participate in activities enthusiastically. Even though it requires time and effort to do research and choose interesting topics for students, I will do my best for my students because I really want them to be prepared for presenting their opinions freely about various issues when called upon. I want them to use English not just for survival in another country, but for critical thinking and speaking.

My initial doubts on myself, whether or not I am cut out for a teacher, have been fading away. It is because the TESOL course has taught me detailed and concrete methodologies about teaching English. I also owe a lot to my TESOL instructor and my peer instructors. Frank was such a great encourager. He kept trying to give me assurance that I could be a good teacher. His feedback was very helpful to me to find out what I should work on in my future English classes. He helped me to define ideas on how to make a student-centered class. My peer instructors were also very supportive. We could share our worries and concerns about our future as an English teacher, and they always pointed out some confident aspects of me that I didn’t even consider. I was grateful to hear their positive feedback about my performance in the class. It gave me strength to believe in myself. Aside from outcomes of studying, sincere and honest advice from peer instructors is a great asset I gained from the TESOL course, and it will give me spiritual nourishment for the next chapter of my life.

 Now, as a TESOL certified English facilitator, I am standing on the threshold of my new path. I will build up experiences in the teaching field and work my way up to the final destination; opening an English class for students from lower income brackets. I believe that having access to a proper English education without too much financial burden can help them to restore their dreams and continue to harbor faith in themselves. If I could make any difference in rectifying educational inequity, it would mean that all my effort and time are rewarded tenfold. Until I achieve this goal, I won’t neglect what I was taught in the TESOL course and will give of myself without fear or reservation for my students. I will see students’ demands for learning English and know how to accede to them carefully. Prior to taking this course, it seemed an impossible challenge for me. Aristotle said, ‘A likely impossibility is always preferable to an unconvincing possibility.’ He was right. I have found a right road, and now have basic qualifications to go on a journey. This TESOL course let me know my potential is limitless as long as I never cease to make efforts. My turn has come.