

Philosophy of Teaching-Proficient/Meets

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FEINSTEIN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING (TESL 553)

SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING | SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING |
SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAMS AN... | EXPECTATIONS OF MYSELF AS A...

My awareness and interest in English Language Learners began approximately four years ago. I was substituting in a middle school ESL self-contained classroom and was moved by the students in the room. They all were very motivated to learn, so appreciative to their teachers and the opportunity to receive an education. The teachers on the team shared some of the students' stories with me about the students' backgrounds and the adversities that some of them had faced and were overcoming. I enjoyed working with these students so much that it prompted me to take the courses in order to receive an endorsement to teach English as a Second Language.

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Philosophy of Teaching (TES...

Beliefs about Second Language Learning

Language learning occurs through practice and in no other setting is greater practice needed than in an English Language Learner (ELL) classroom. All language whether it is listening, speaking, reading or writing is attained through practice. We have been exposed to language from the time we were born and have been practicing all forms since. The ELL students need an environment that is comfortable and safe to receive instruction and the opportunity to practice expressing the new language themselves.

I believe language is developmental. There are steps that one takes in learning and one can't rearrange the steps or rush someone through them. Listening and speaking develop first but written language is introduced at the same time. Using visuals to demonstrate vocabulary and material gives the student something to connect with. Everyone has a different pace of learning and, in that process, levels of security develop as well. Exposure to language is essential in order for students to learn language, providing opportunities for students to listen to language being spoken, and providing opportunities to respond whether it is through speaking or writing. Allowing students the opportunity to practice speaking, listening, and reading to one another in pairs or small groups helps them to negotiate meaning with each other and practice in a non-threatening atmosphere. The classroom needs to be a language rich environment where there are many forms of language practice happening: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Success in the four language domains comes through providing the opportunities to practice in a nurturing environment.

As the ELL classroom teacher, I need to be cognizant of what kinds of language experiences my students are bringing to the classroom. Have they had any formal education? Are they literate in their native language? Does their native language have any carry over to English? The answers to these questions will help guide my instruction to the students.

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Philosophy of Teaching (TES...

Beliefs about Second Language Teaching

Being in an ELL classroom brings many diverse cultures together and a sensitivity to these cultures needs to be present. Students should be encouraged to share "their stories" with the class. By allowing students to speak, or write about a topic that they are and "expert" in teachers provide the opportunity for students to be proud of their heritage and learn from one another. Presentations such as these can lead to a lesson in compare/contrast. As the teacher, I have to provide opportunities for students to interact with one another on many levels and scaffold the instruction for the differing language levels in the classroom. My speech needs to be at a slower rate of speed and I need to repeat and rephrase information to allow learners the opportunity to hear the ideas more than once. Concepts and terms must also be provided in written form so the learner may a visual input as well. I try to appeal to as many senses as possible to help reinforce what is being taught. I always want my classroom to be a positive, encouraging experience.

While gradelevel content must be taught, I must show how it is related outside the classroom walls. Students must see how what is being taught is relevant to the world around them and make this knowledge meaningful. Content should begin by allowing students to share their background knowledge on a subject matter and introduce key terms for that subject. Together as a class we can embark on the learning experience.

When I taught a social studies unit on Ancient Greece we started with locating Greece on a map and watched a video to help build some background knowledge. I used a textbook for some information, as well as the internet, and books from the library. Students were able to see the history of Ancient Greece being the birth place of democracy and connecting it to democratic government today. During this time the winter Olympics were taking place and this helped to show the influence that Ancient Greece still has on the world today. We looked at Ancient Greek architecture, columns, found how it has influenced the architecture of many buildings and monuments in society today. The Ancient Greek myths and legends are still referred to with the legend of *The Trojan Horse*. We read the legend and discussed the saying, "Beware of Greeks bearing gifts." The myth of *Pandora's Box* was read and again how that myth is still referred to. Students retold these legends and myths by creating a comic strip retelling the story. All of this exposure allowed students the opportunity to research and made studying Ancient Greece alive and relevant to their lives today with rich content language. Through the lessons and activities, students were able to experience and practice language in many forms. This is just one example of showing how academic content and language are related to social language. Lessons and activities should demonstrate how the language and content being taught goes beyond the classroom. Making the learning real is key to motivating students.

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Philosophy of Teaching (TES...)

Beliefs About Ideal Second Language Programs and Curricula

While planning units and lessons for my ELL students I always have three teaching objectives; content linguistics and communicative Focusing on these three objectives insures that my students will learn and practice deeper language meaning

Much of what is taught and should be taught is driven by then state standards through the GLEs and school district mandates the using the materials that are provided But as the ELL teacher I can not rely solely on the course text material Often the course material is not appropriate for ELL learners This being the case I need to look for resources beyond the textbooks Using other media such as videos the internet library books and field trips when possible allows me the opportunity to present material to my learners in various forms that are appropriate for their their language levels and increase their interest in the topics

Assessing learners' development is important in monitoring their growth progress during a unit of study Allowing students to fill in a KWL chart or keep a journal would be one way of assessing at the start of a unit During the unit assessments should be done to check on students' comprehension to allow for adjustments in instruction and interventions; this can be done through quick activities or a teacher checklist The final assessment can be conducted in many different forms and allow the students the opportunity to show and express what they have learned The KWL chart or journal can be reviewed with the students to show them their personal progress and growth in the subject matter

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Philosophy of Teaching (TES...

Expectations of Myself as an ELL Professional

As a teacher of ELL my learning is never ending. I will always need to educate myself about my students, get to know their cultures, their personal stories, their interests, etc. Developing a personal relationship with the students will aid in motivating their learning. Trying to connect with the students on some level and motivating them to reach the next level is my constant goal.

Collaborating with other ELL and mainstream teachers is also essential. "Two heads are better than one," is how I feel. Sharing different practices and techniques with fellow teachers is beneficial. I enjoyed and learned a great deal in courses when teachers shared their experiences of teaching ELLs and what approaches and practices worked for them, what did not, and what they would try differently in the future. These kinds of discussions can help bring to the surface struggles that many may be having and allow an opportunity for working together as peers to find a new approach or solution.

Attending workshops and conferences supported or endorsed by TESOL is another way that I can keep myself current with new teaching practices and techniques. These conferences allow me the opportunity to hear about new research findings and meet fellow ELL professionals. The presenter often demonstrates some practice that they have had great results with in doing with their students. At these conferences there is often a lot of literature and publishers displaying resource material that I will have an opportunity to look at before making an investment.

Because the ELL population is a minority in most communities and lacking proficiency in the English language, I will have to be their advocate. I must keep myself abreast of the current issues and policies in education and the impact it will have on my students. I must be sure that my administration is aware of any of the negative impact new mandates can have on my students either in mandatory testing or funding. These concerns I will support with research to substantiate my concerns.

Working with ELL students is a lot of work but very rewarding and fruitful.

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Assessment Result

Criterion	Rating	Criterion Comments
Beliefs about Second Language Learning	4.0	Very good; 4+
Beliefs about Second Language Teaching	6.0	
Beliefs about Second Language Programs and Curricula	4.0	
Discussion of Second Language Teaching as a Profession	5.0	
Logic and Clarity; Grammar and Spelling	4.0	