

Philosophy of Language Teaching

What I believe about learning and teaching in general is like building a house. In order to build a house, one must have a solid foundation on which to build. Learning and teaching should start similarly, at the ground level with a solid foundation.

The aspect of learning is like each step in the process of building a house and the learners must participate in the process of building, as if a child uses building blocks to play with. Teaching however is a blueprint for the learners. It gives the learners the basic ideas on which to draw a bigger picture and, at the same time, determine the foundation from which to learn and build. We teach the students not just by reading the blue print but also by planning and finding the necessary items for the house. Similarly in a lesson plan, one must start with the basic elements. Learning a language, for example, one might start learning the target language alphabet.

There is a somewhat complicated relationship between learning and teaching. When there are numerous aspects to the subject, like building a house, it may become difficult to explain clearly unless a standard format and logical progression is followed, as with the blueprint. However, as long as one has a defined target or goal, learning will continue as the learners' interest and participation progress commensurately with the teaching. Learning is a lifetime process. Just like the home that requires fresh paint and a new roof over time, so continues the learning that takes one to the next level; there's always more to learn.

Teaching, meanwhile, is considered as giving guidance to the learners, and it should be delivered in such a way that it is enjoyable and effective. As the building blocks start to form a recognizable shape, there is generally excitement in how that final product will look. From a

scholastic perspective, songs and games often make the learning fun; it's no longer rote memorization to the end goal. A builder may find excitement in acquiring different materials and supplies to personalize the home, making it more than just four walls and a roof. The educators should try to do similarly with the learners; there are often many paths to the same goal.

However, when there are obstacles, like needing to fix a part of the house, learners may need help right away or need to go out and ask for help. The builder goes to Home Depot to find tools, pieces and materials in order to fix and/or ask an expert for advice or about how to fix. In a learning and teaching process, a learner with motivation, like one willing to fix the house, participates in the classroom. Looking for the pieces, learning and applying that which they have acquired; like trying to use and apply the pieces to fix, they are building knowledge.

Determining goals of the classroom comes first to being an excellent and effective language teacher. With an established set of goals one may build a lesson plan and determine what and how to deliver that lesson with the use of appropriate materials through a mixture of common and unique teaching methods. It's important to remember however that teaching can be a monumental task despite having grown through years of learning ourselves. Knowing the learners' needs, the teacher must comprehensively think through the processes and prepare, from the learners' perspective, the numerous steps to accomplish to reach the end goal.

No one can know everything but knowing the goal and determining the right path to attaining that goal is what provides the teacher the baseline to effective teaching. It is, therefore, even with the most basic subject, that the lesson structure can be effective and useful for the learners. Therefore, starting by learning the alphabet to syntactical and semantically structure a language is not just being able to read the blueprint but also being able to build up a structure.

Other than building a house, there are things that we must consider. What are the concerns and how can we give a correctly balanced lesson to push the learners to learn? It requires that teachers must allow learners to make mistakes and when it happens, teachers make sure that learners understand there is no need to worry but rather learn from these mistakes. Another is the delivery of proper feedback, which motivates the learners. Lastly, knowing a little of the learners' backgrounds and needs also helps any teacher to develop a lesson plan. Therefore, if we consider these matters carefully while teaching a language, learners will acquire the knowledge effectively.

Finally, building a house is not something that we can do over night. It takes time and we may not see results right away, but at some point the learners will acknowledge what they have learned and will descend its goodness to coming generations so that they can read and build their own houses. Isn't it a great joy to see the learners growing as teachers? We must not stop learning and teaching.