

Title:

EVERYONE HAS A UNIQUE TEACHING BEGINNING

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My story is as unique as it may be unique for anyone that will find themselves writing a piece of their life for someone to read, share with others and reflect on particular experiences that one has gone through. Anywhere that we live, we may find hardships that eventually will lead us to make drastic decisions to help us find that happiness that we are looking for.

At one time, I lived in what many people consider one of the best countries to live in North America. I lived a nice life, at one point anyways, and I was able to accomplish many things for myself. I had many happy moments, until I got myself involved in a toxic relationship that changed many things or just about everything. I was no longer happy and many things changed which led me to make that drastic decision that I mentioned earlier. I made the decision to come back to my homeland and do a personal project and show many people that here in Colombia life can be good, not just good but happy, which after all it was what I was looking for, as I mentioned, I lived unhappily for many years in a different country.

I found myself in my homeland but not knowing much about my homeland, everything was new and exciting. After one year here in Colombia, I went back to that country in North America. As soon as I landed, I did not feel comfortable and so I decided to come back and do what I originally was going to do and that was to open a business, but for money issues I could not open the business that I wanted.

In all reality, I never planned to be a teacher but I put my faith and trust in that beautiful, unexplainable power called GOD. I noticed that here in Colombia English was/is needed so I started to move around and started asking questions and it lead me to be a teacher at a school. In the beginning, I found hardships and I almost decided to run but I stuck it through and I am happy I did. I ended up not just liking to teach but I fell in love with this profession and today I am still in love with it, therefore I decided to do this major in English Pedagogy at University Luis Amigo so that I can do many more things for myself and others. The desire to make a

difference for many people and all kinds of people is extremely rewarding. To be part of someone's positive development, no matter what age is placed in front of me has a very happy explanation.

I remember that as a kid we always had family outings, moments to share and those were always special moments. I also had all types of friends in school, and I never discriminated anyone and the jobs that I really enjoyed most were those that had to do with being involved with people, all types of people.

My family is not too surprised that I became a teacher because they know that I love people, and I love to help and guide people in the best direction possible. Many times people ask me, "John, how do you manage to do so many things?" Maybe they just see it as, so many things can make you tired all the time, but when you enjoy doing what you are doing and when you see people's reactions, it gives me some type of energy to do what I have committed to do at that particular moment. Yes, many times I do find myself doing many things and being human, I do get tired. Please, do not get me wrong, I do love those moments of just simply being with myself and doing things that I consider enjoyable, just simply taking a little break from my everyday moments full of surprises.

Preparing myself for teaching is a never-ending process now that part of the teaching success evolves all the time. I do not think, I know that there are not two classes that are alike, each class has its own uniqueness, even if you have four third grade groups trying to reach the same goals, each class will be different. Preparing is a constant thing, reading, talking to other teachers, doing research of different things that other teachers do or have done. Kumaravadivelu (2003), a great educator invitation to teachers is:

To shape the practice of everyday teaching, teachers need to have a holistic understanding of what happens in their classroom. They need to systematically observe their teaching, interpret their classroom events,

evaluate their outcomes, identify problems, find solutions, and try them out to see once again what works and what doesn't. In other words, they have to become strategic thinkers as well as strategic practitioners. As strategic thinkers, they need to reflect on the specific needs, wants, situations, and processes of learning and teaching. As strategic practitioners, they need to develop knowledge and skills necessary to self-observe, self-analyze, and self-evaluate their own teaching acts (p. 2).

In other words, Kumaravadivelu is inviting teachers to create and re-create their own method(s) of teaching depending on their present situation. Along these lines and, as with anything new, students first observe to see how teachers present themselves. Those students who dare will start testing you to see how you will respond to certain comments or actions done by the students, but in all reality, I have been around so in general I have responded well with most of my students, but let's remember that every situation is different.

You should not perceive how the class is going to be without walking into the classroom first, once you go in, you, as a teacher must try to observe as many details as possible; how many students are there? If girls and boys, how many girls how many boys? How is the classroom? You start throwing little simple, foolish questions to see how and who responds.

What I have noticed in a class is that students do not want to listen to a teacher the entire class; explaining, explaining, explaining. The students want you there and they want to learn but you need to connect and I think I can do that very well. Obviously as a teacher, you need to show that you know what you are teaching and you have to show that it is important to learn what you are teaching and that eventually you will use what you have learnt at one point or another. As another great educator has said, "we cannot teach what we do not know and let's live the knowledge that we have with our students". (Freire, 2004, p. 30).

My strong points come from the understanding that I am not perfect but I am committed to continue learning, so why should I expect my students to be perfect? I do expect however, that with my help, when they get to a certain level that they will be better people for society and that they will do their best to make society a better place for many.

Being human you will always have weak points, it may be that maybe you said something you should not have said or in a tone you should not have used, the most important thing is to treat individuals who are in front of you with great respect and to learn from your mistakes.

So, here I am writing something I would not have ever thought of writing. Let's recall a very important personal account of this piece of my life that you are about to finish reading, and that is that there were many years that I lived which I never thought I would be doing what I consider the best job in the world.

As some great minds may say: "Think fast but speak and act slowly".

References

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- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond Methods: Macrostrategies for Language Teaching*. New Haven, Ct: Yale University Press.