

Statement of Teaching Philosophy

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I really believe teaching the Spanish language is a vocation I acquired long time ago and it has been growing since, with a bigger dedication during my long stay in the United States. I firmly believe I was born to teach, and I was also born to be a good learner, a very good one. As a matter of fact, the ways I teach, the methodologies, the technologies and techniques all evolve in a daily basis together with my professional development and both, the very important influence of listening to my students and the sharing of experiences of a good team of professors. For all these reasons, I can simply say that I will always be a passionate teacher who learns by teaching dedicated people willing to learn.

I know that a huge element and priority in my language classroom is to develop an enthusiastic relationship by providing a kind environment where my students will feel motivated every single day of the course to accomplish their learning goals (in my case my learning and teaching ones). My own personality and my teaching style bring in enthusiasm into the classroom along with class materials, cultural information elements, technology, etc., in order to increase my students' desire to learn and at the same time provide me with a better understanding of their needs. I am an open person who enjoys approaching people with respect and a kind smile; therefore my students deserve it equally. My personality helps me interact with my students while I guide them in their learning process. Furthermore, my preparation and the instruction in my native Spanish language enable me to portray my own culture(s) and to successfully share with my students an appreciation for another language and culture(s).

To accomplish my goals as a teacher I motivate my students toward a level of independence where they will develop a desire to learn, think and determine for themselves. To carry on my end I rely upon methodologies which include activities that require a total immersion in the target language, exercises that will allow my students to see how cultural matters can be understood by role playing in Spanish the situations they face everyday. It is not enough to study the language; one must also adapt the theoretical learning to the real meaning of real life situations. "Mayonesa" is not "Ali-oli". They both have different origins, preparations and tastes. It is my believe that all students must learn the language skills along with cultural elements in a coherent way, so they will feel encouraged to think critically and to communicate and share their learnings.

In my pursuit to promote cross-cultural awareness and its appreciation by dedicated language learners I try to bring about as much cultural factors as possible from my own culture(s). I am a native from Galicia who has also lived many years in Barcelona and more than a decade in the Mid West of the USA. An example that endorses my deep admiration for cross-cultural understanding and which I use to encourage my students to reach their pursuits is that "Iacón

con grelos” is not “mongetes amb botifarra” nor “gazpacho” nor “meatloaf”. These meals are all representative of their own culture(s) and I deeply think their roots, recipes, uses, and so on, are worthy to be an interesting case of study. Nevertheless, there is a tool I often use to get my students involve from the beginning of the course. It is an interactive activity that can be found in the E-learning page (Moodle) provided by IES where my students can write their opinions regarding the topic of the forum.

For example, the theme of this semester is about the stereotype “Spaniards are impolite people” and the goal is both to get students opinions about the Description-Interpretation-Evaluation on the topic and to have also a debate on-line in order to reject or to minimize the negative effects produced by the stereotype. I decided to use this forum among other things to emphasize the importance of individual participation and collaboration, allowing the students to come up with their own questions and conclusions about this cultural topic. By the end of the course students must write a composition with opinions based on their own experiences abroad by using the knowledge and understanding they have accrued with their own critical thinking. As it is expected the results are very amazing, often reflecting a unique perspective of their cross-cultural awareness.

I believe this cultural-technological approach to teach Spanish enables students to acquire language skills in a manner that keeps them interested and motivated, requiring their own critical thinking for discussion forums which makes their learning their own. The results I have seen in my students are quite positive. My students acknowledge that the passion and energy I devote to their education is often translated into their passion to think and learn, and that is why teaching Spanish is my life.