

Unit 1 – The world of TESOL- schools, students and the EFL/ESL classroom

What is TESOL?

Becoming a Teacher of English to Speakers of Other Languages is not just an opportunity to travel and live in exotic locations, but also to expand the world and lives of those you teach. While spending time with your students, both formally in the classroom, and informally outside of it, it's likely that you'll find your role in the new place you're living in will be more than just that of an English teacher. While you are mingling with the locals and learning the language and culture of the country, and while you're sampling exciting new cuisines and forming new friendships, you'll also be exchanging similar information with the local people you meet and students you teach.

So much of language is connected with the culture in which it is spoken. Think about all of the cultural information you will also be teaching your students as you teach them English. You won't just teach your students the words: "hello" and "goodbye". You will also teach them the handshake and a wave that accompanies these words! This is one of the reasons why native speakers of English are in such huge demand overseas. It's only native speakers who really know the language and the culture that goes with it intrinsically and innately! Locals in the area where you are teaching cannot ever truly be fluent in English without some understanding of and contact with your culture too.

As we move into an ever more globalised world, the need for people to be able to successfully communicate in English is growing in importance. For people in developing nations, knowledge of English is vital for their further development: it provides a pathway to getting ahead in the workforce, or for their governments to make agreements in trade and commerce. In developed non-English speaking countries, English comes with some level of prestige, and is taught in all school curricula from primary school level and onwards; already it is a fundamental skill for those who work in business or science. Thus, a growing demand for native speakers to fill the requirements of primary schools, secondary schools, private language institutes and universities exists worldwide.

There are many reasons why students abroad want to learn the English language from a native speaker. Their reasons for wanting to study English are also many and varied. You may have a student who needs to speak English to compete for a promotion in the multinational company in which they work. Another student may want to study at a university in an English-speaking country. There are definitely students who may just want to be able to better understand their favourite pop song or English-language movie! If you are volunteering as an English teacher, it's likely your students will be living in poverty, and see English as a way of bettering themselves and making more of the opportunities in their life. That said, not all of your students are going to be highly motivated, and some may not even care about studying the language at all!

Even those students who are highly motivated will be likely to experience difficulties as they study, because English is such a tough language to grasp! Did you know there are between 600,000 and 800,000 words in the English language, a figure that is constantly changing as the language evolves? Have you ever thought about some of the strange expressions we use in our everyday speech, such as "take a seat", "break a leg" and "hit the hay"? Imagine taking any of these idioms literally! What about the nuances that exist with the spelling of our words and their usage? There are so many English words that are spelt the same, but pronounced differently, dependent upon the part of speech they are. Think about how the two words, both spelled "entrance", are pronounced in this sentence: "The magician hoped to entrance the audience with his grand entrance." Helping your students to come to terms with such linguistic difficulties means that part of your job as a teacher of English is to inspire, motivate, assist and persist when the going gets tough!

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You may be starting to feel a bit daunted- but don't be! Bear in mind that being a fluent and/or native speaker of English means that you know the English language intrinsically, and you know whether things sound and look right

(or wrong). You also possess many skills and qualities which you'll find to be very useful when you step into the classroom. In this course we will show you ways in which you can help your students improve their English while keeping them motivated, and how to have some fun along the way!

What does an English lesson look like?

For some people, the thought of returning to a classroom environment, especially in the role of a teacher, may be enough to bring about cold sweats and cause anxiety. Have a think for a moment about a classroom you attended at some stage in the past. Get a picture in your mind of how that classroom looked, how the desks and chairs were laid out, where you sat, where the teacher stood, and think about the roles and relationship which existed between the students and the teacher. Really try and remember how that learning experience made you feel.

I'm sure that not everyone necessarily has the fondest memories at the moment! Was the teacher at the front of the room, acting as the boss, and completely in charge? Were you as a student sitting in front of the teacher, listening carefully to what was being said (or at least pretending to!) and having very little opportunity to talk and offer your own thoughts on things? Were you all seated in rows, with desk and chairs lined up side by side? Was there very little communication taking place, with a strained kind of rapport between the students and the teacher?

If this classroom sounds reminiscent of the one in your memory, here's some good news: the ESL classroom is very different to the traditional classroom of your memories. In the past 25 or so years, there has been much innovation in the field of learning languages. Teachers are now encouraged to do away with old-fashioned views and methods of teaching, and instead are encouraged to explore new, fun and exciting ways of learning. Language classrooms are now focused on encouraging students to become fluent in speaking, and as a result, students are given opportunities to practise their oral communication through games and activities; the role of the teacher has changed so the emphasis is not on them, but on the students. Students are now given more freedom over the content of their lessons and the styles of learning that can be used within (and outside of) the classroom. I'm sure that you have now just breathed a sigh of relief!

What you will watch is a good model of a teaching style known as the Communicative Approach. This approach has been around since the 70s, and is now one commonly adopted by language schools and teachers all around the world. Some questions to answer will follow each section of the lesson, and you will need to do this before watching the next segment.

The stages of a lesson delivered using the Communicative Approach will follow the same basic structure, and will be consistent from one lesson to the next:

Warm Up

The warm-up is the first activity in your lesson and is designed to put the students into 'learning mode' and get them focussed on English, rather than their native tongue.

1. Make it fun and positive! This will set the mood for the rest of your class!
2. Make it easy: the idea is to help your students get into English-speaking mode.
3. Use songs, games, cocktail activities, bingo, charades, or any other fun activity.

Review

Whether it has been one day or one week since you last taught your class, a review stage is vital for reinforcing and refreshing previously learned material, and for consolidating previously-acquired knowledge relevant to your lesson for the day.

1. Think about how ALL students can be actively involved and speaking.
2. The review section may be combined with the warm-up. Both should be FUN!

Target Language (Drill-work)

The target language stage introduces the core content (including new vocabulary and grammar concepts) of your lesson using drill-work. Remember:

1. Use several clear examples.
2. Refer to board-work to help both yourself and your students.
3. Give the correct form and be consistent.
4. Use props, pictures, visuals, and realia (real examples of items you are introducing, such as newspapers, magazines, pictures etc.).

Activities

The goal of the activities stage is to get students to use the language presented in the target language section in a communicative and interactive way. There are several types of activities:

Controlled (all language given) → **Semi-controlled** (some creativity involved) → **Free** (students are free to be creative with the language they produce.)

Think about:

1. age appropriacy
2. level appropriacy
3. using both controlled and freer activities
4. 80/20 student/teacher talk-time (is the bulk of language being produced by the students?)
5. 'Fun-Factor!'
6. reinforcement of the target language
7. props, pictures, visuals, realia
8. how to demonstrate the activities

Homework

Write it up on the board, along with an example, or give students a handout. Make sure they know exactly what to do. You may have to demonstrate. Take it up next lesson!

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Eliciting: Rather than just telling your students everything in your lesson explicitly, it is good to attempt to elicit the required information from them. This has the benefit of giving credit to the students for the knowledge they already have and makes the class more communicative overall.

Demonstrate: 'Show them, don't tell them'. Especially with lower level students an explanation alone will not adequately get your message or instruction across. You **MUST** show them what you want them to do! A good demonstration followed by brief questions to check conceptual understanding of the task is a must!

Take-up: This is a technique where after an activity the teacher consolidates the learning that the students have been doing. One way to do this, such as in the case of a discussion activity, is to get a good group to redo it in front of the class. The teacher can then confirm with feedback or add to or consolidate the learning in some way.

What makes a good teacher?

The role the teacher plays is paramount to the type of learning environment that exists for your students. There are many qualities that a good teacher must possess to be effective in the communicative classroom, from patience, understanding and charisma to ability in English and punctuality.

It's not possible for any one person to have ALL the qualities of a good teacher (nobody's perfect!), but doubtless there are a few qualities which you know you definitely have, and others that you may have to work on and develop as you gain more experience in the classroom. By developing and honing your personal qualities and teaching skills, you will be able to create a really successful learning environment for your students: one that involves you and your students interacting well, and enjoying a really good rapport with one another.

The following are some of the many useful techniques you can employ to create a good learning environment:

- Get to know your students' names. By putting in this effort from the very beginning, you can gain instant respect.
- Start to get to know what your students' interests and motivations are. This will enable you to teach your students the English that they really want to learn.
- Always come to class with a lesson that is well planned and prepared, as this shows your students that you have put in the effort to present a lesson that will be useful and interesting. If students are paying your school money to be taught by a native speaker, it's especially important to be professional!
- Hardest of all, you should also try and talk less, and let your students do all the participating. This way you are allowing your students time to practise speaking, and you can step back into more of a facilitator role. Ideally, you will almost be incidental in the classroom, simply helping, advising, and encouraging your students to interact and be involved as much as possible.

What is a needs analysis?

When getting to know your students, the most important information you should try and get from them initially is related to what interests they have outside of the classroom, and what their motivations are for studying English. By knowing your students' interests, you can plan and prepare lessons which they can relate to and which they will find interesting. You might also find it useful in your lesson planning, to know a bit about the reasons your students are studying English, as this will allow you to identify the types of situations and language your students will need in the future. It will also be useful to gauge your students':

- level
- ability
- strengths and weaknesses, in terms of language skills
- what English they have studied in the past
- skills they would like to practice more

Getting answers to some of these questions is what is referred to as a needs-analysis. Some of your needs-analysis might be done informally, as you listen to your students respond to tasks in the classroom, and hear incidental conversations during your lessons or before and after class. You can also conduct a more formal needs analysis, in the form of a questionnaire or survey which your students complete in class. If you are doing a formal needs-analysis you will need to ask questions which are open-ended, so you can assess the writing abilities of your students.

A formal needs analysis should be conducted in one of your first lessons, so that you can use it in planning future lessons with your students. Dependent upon the level of students you are teaching, or their age, you may decide to stick to the more informal needs analysis techniques. Or even better, you could make your needs analysis an activity that your students can perform in class, one that gets them practising their English. Perhaps your students could interview one another, asking set questions you want to get information on, and then report back their findings. You will thus glean the information you require, while maintaining a student-centred environment.

If you are teaching small children, or students with a very low language level, it might be better to find out a bit more about your students' needs using visuals. A fun activity could be getting your students to cut pictures from magazines and create a collage about themselves (or another appropriate visual activity) which they could then show you. Always think of ways to ensure your classroom is one that gets your students involved and interested whenever possible!

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Study Techniques

From your needs-analysis, it's possible that you may discover that your students are new to learning English, or perhaps to learning altogether! If your students are not so experienced at studying languages, the task ahead of them in learning English is going to be quite difficult. Studying itself is a skill, and there are a number of things that you can do to assist your students in becoming highly successful learners.

The things that your students are and aren't good at doing will often depend upon the way they have learnt to study in the past. Some of your students may not be familiar with, or feel comfortable with, the communicative style of teaching. Some students may need to be given strategies which will assist them with things like memorisation of new words; or with perfecting their pronunciation; or with using new grammatical structures correctly. Acquisition of a new language is actually a skill in itself. Studying a new language requires the body and mind to become accustomed to speaking, listening, writing, and reading in that language. Much like your body needs to get used to riding a bike for the first time, or using a new computer program!

Some students will be more adept at and accustomed to learning a new language than others, due to knowing the skills required. Of course, learning a new language requires practice, but one of your jobs as a teacher is to show your students how they can practise and become better language learners. You could actually incorporate study skills tips into your lessons with your students.

Some suggestions for effective practice and study techniques that you may be able to pass onto your students include:

- Remind your students to write down new vocabulary when they hear it, and to then try and use it in a sentence orally to help memorise its use.
- Encourage your students to practise using the language whenever possible outside the classroom, through watching English-language TV, listening to English-language radio and songs, and speaking to other English speakers whenever possible.
- Study aloud, with a friend, rather than trying to study silently, as this allows auditory memory and provides pronunciation/speech practice as well!
- Study daily, for ten minutes, rather than for 60 minutes just once a week.
- Review old topics and previously learnt vocabulary, as recycling familiar information and skills makes it easier to integrate new ones.
- Develop a good attitude and have clear personal goals in place.
- Make flash cards of new vocabulary and carry them around with you to recite whenever you get a few moments throughout the day.

The techniques that you provide to your students may be more suited to some than to others. This is because there are different types of learners, who learn most effectively using different techniques:

1. **Auditory:** These are learners who need to hear things in order to learn them well.
2. **Visual:** These learners rely on sighting new language before they retain it properly.
3. **Tactile:** These are learners who require physical touch, and hands-on styles of teaching.
4. **Kinaesthetic:** These learners prefer acting and moving around.

You could have an array of different learning types within the one class, and some students may be a combination of any of these!

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Types of Schools and Students

Types of schools

There are a lot of different types of schools where you may find yourself working in as an English teacher overseas. The working environment within the school, the size of your classes, the resources available to you, the support you get and the expectations the school has of you will vary dependent upon the type of school which you are working for. There are definite advantages and disadvantages for working at each type of school, although your own personality and what you want from the teaching experience will also determine which type of school you may prefer to work at.

Here is a brief summary of the different schools. As you read about each type of school, think about what you could see as an advantage and a disadvantage of teaching in that particular environment.

1. Language Schools

These can be either:

- franchise schools
- small private language schools

Franchise Schools are chains that operate nationwide, or even internationally. If you teach at a franchise school, you may be given the opportunity to teach a wide variety of students of different ages and motivations. There will likely be other foreign teachers working at the school with a native English-speaking director. Usually there are good resources available for teachers to use, with a very well set-out curriculum for teachers to follow quite stringently. It's important to note that each branch of the franchise will be run slightly differently, with different management, so even though it's the same company, the experience with that company could vary from branch to branch.

Small Private Language Schools on the other hand are usually run by local business people. They can be one-off schools or one of a few, but the difference is that they are not franchised, and they are run by the same person or group of people. These sometimes family-run schools can be small or large, and may or may not be as well-resourced, but this would allow you much more freedom as a teacher. You may be the only foreign teacher at the school, which allows you a much more personal experience. Like the chain schools, you will get to teach a variety of ages and levels.

2. In-Company Classes

In-Company Classes are those that take place in business organisations, and would usually require you to teach the staff of that organisation business English. You might be employed by the organisation, and would teach at different branches of the organisation, or you may be sent by the language school you work for, as part of a contract to provide business English classes to staff in that company; the latter option is by far the most common. This work is usually paid on an hourly basis and could involve working very early mornings and late nights, before and after the staff do their regular work. Your students in these classes may have varying motivations for coming to class, ranging from fulfilling work obligations to wanting to improve their English for promotion or transfer.

3. Government or Private Primary and Secondary Schools

These schools are like those you are probably familiar with, either as part of the public system or private schooling system. These are traditional style classes, and your job is usually to provide spoken English practice to students as part of the school's English curriculum. In some countries, you would need to have a Bachelor of Education to be able to teach in the government schooling system, but in other countries, there is a greater need for native-speaker teachers in the classrooms and the requirements are not so stringent. Government schools do not have as much money as private language schools, so resources may not be the best. You may be the only foreign teacher at the school, and will often have a local teacher in the classroom with you to assist with discipline and classroom management. You will have larger classes (anywhere from 30-70 students!) and often mixed ability levels within the one class. If you are doing volunteer English teaching, it's likely you will be working in a government-run primary or secondary school.

4. Universities

The situation at foreign universities is similar to that of primary and secondary schools. Students at universities abroad may be offered English lessons as part of their studies, so there is a requirement for native speakers to teach these students. Dependent upon the country, the qualifications required to teach at a university will vary, but it is fairly common for teachers in university positions to have a Bachelor degree as a minimum.

5. International Schools

Teaching at this type of school is usually only for native English-speaking teachers who are qualified with a Bachelor of Education. The students at international schools are usually native speakers, and are children of expats who have been based in employment positions abroad. You may not just teach English, but any of the core subjects offered at that school, such as maths or science. This is quite a different teaching experience to that which you would have teaching local students.

6. Private Tuition

Private tuition is a reality for most ESL teachers when they live abroad. It is very common for English teachers to do private tuition in their spare time for some extra cash. In some cases, it might be written into your contract with the school you work for that you do not undertake private tuition- the reason for this being that the school doesn't want you to poach their students! So be judicious in the students you teach and respect your contract, your school and your director's wishes. Private tuition can be challenging, as the one-on-one time between the teacher and the student can make the communicative approach difficult to implement, and there still needs to be a plan for the lesson in place so the session's goals are clear and your student actually makes progress!

Types of students

As well as different types of schools, there are different types of students, who will require different styles and methods of teaching. In order to better understand which type of teaching position you would be most suited for, we will now look at some of the common types of English language learner.

1. General English

This is a very common type of class to teach at a language school, and it's usual for children, teenagers and adults who want to achieve a general competence in English to enrol in this type of class. A standard General English course will integrate the core language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, with an emphasis on communication skills and improving the students' fluency and confidence in speaking English. Teachers will usually teach from a text book which follows a grammar-based syllabus, but if teaching General English teachers will usually supplement their lessons with authentic materials and communicative activities and games.

2. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

Under this banner come all learning situations where students want to study English for very specific and practical reasons in a niche area. Probably the most popular realm of ESP would be 'Business English', which occurs in most countries. However, there are also other niche fields where students require the English for that field of work. For example, people who are doctors and nurses in their own country may undertake an 'English for Medical Purposes' course that will allow them to practise their profession in an English-speaking country. People who work in IT and who want to work in that field in an English-speaking country might do an 'English for IT Professionals' course. Some students may be studying courses in 'English for Golfers', 'English for Scuba Divers', 'English for Hospitality' and there are also very popular ESP courses that prepare students for passing particular high stakes English level exams such as IELTS and CAE.

Teachers who teach ESP usually need to have specialised knowledge in the field they are teaching in, as well as TESOL experience. If you have specialised knowledge in a particular field you might find that there is a market out there for you, but do remember that you are not teaching this technical skill (such as nursing), but the English your students require to perform that skill (being a nurse!). If you are asked to teach ESP and you don't know the content area very well, you may have to study up on the field yourself so you can have an understanding of the English your students require.

3. Conversation Classes

It is common for ESL teachers to undertake conversation classes, sometimes referred to by schools as 'English Corners'. These are quite informal lessons where your students are given the opportunity to speak to you and each other in English. You would need to find topics that interest the age group of your students, or find controversial topics that will encourage good discussions to happen.

4. English for Academic Purposes (EAP)

These lessons are for students who are at an advanced level of English, and who are preparing to enter university in an English-speaking country. You would be giving your students practice in study skills, note taking, presenting seminars, writing assignments, researching and referencing as well as listening to lectures effectively. Often, students in EAP classes will know how to do these skills in their own language, but need to be able to transfer these skills into an English-speaking environment. Often there are different conventions for studying in Western cultures, which students from other backgrounds will need to prepare for in EAP classes.

What do the levels mean?

In the world of TESOL, students are usually divided up into classes based upon their ability and skill in English. In any given class at a private language school, you could have 12 students, all from different ages and backgrounds, but all at the same ability level. It's really important that students are placed into the correct level by the school so that the students are given the best possible opportunity to learn. If a student is put into a class where the language is too difficult, they will lose confidence; by the same token, a student who is learning English that is too easy will become bored. If you are teaching at a public government-run school, it may not be possible for students to be divided up according to skill, and this situation may be more challenging for you as a teacher. Known as a mixed-level class, in this scenario your students will all be the same age, but of varying English levels- some students might have a high skill level, others a very low level, but you are required to teach the same material!

It's also important to recognise that there is no correlation between age and level. It's possible to teach a small 8-year old child quite high-level English, but by the same token, you may have an 80-year-old adult who is an absolute beginner of English! Do not assume older students will have a higher level than younger ones, as this is not usually the case! Also remember that an adult student will have many of the concepts you're teaching in their own language, and that they just need the English words to describe those concepts, while kids may not know the words in their own language yet so you also have to teach the concept along with the English!

As a first-time teacher, it's unlikely you will ever have to place your students into levels—this will usually already be done for you by the head teacher or director of your school. A placement test is usually given to determine the student's level in order to place them in the appropriate class. Students are usually assessed based on their knowledge of grammar as well as their spoken communication skills. Some students might be grammar whizzes, but unable to confidently communicate, while others may be excellent speakers and listeners but not so great at writing and reading. This will usually depend upon what the focus has been in their regular English lessons.

There are some uniform terms which are used within the TESOL industry to refer to student levels, although it is common for different terms to be used by different schools. In some schools, these terms may be avoided altogether, with colours, numbers or objects used instead.

The following table shows the standardised levels and what students at each level are likely to be able to achieve in English- this is a general guide as it may differ slightly from place to place and in different EFL/ESL curriculum books:

| Level | Ability | What Grammar is Taught |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Absolute (zero) Beginner | These are students who have had no or little contact with the English language. It's uncommon to find this kind of student in the world today. They will speak 1-3 word utterances and use lots of gestures to communicate! | Building vocabulary is the focus through teaching basic nouns (body parts, colours, family) as well as present simple affirmative, negative and interrogative. |
| Beginner | Comprehension is limited to key words and common phrases, speech is restricted to very simple, unelaborated answers with many hesitations and there is no ability to extend conversation; pronunciation is poor. May recognise and be able to copy some words but may not understand them. Still rapidly learning new vocabulary. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - verb 'to be' - there is, there are - possessives - adjectives - adverbs of frequency |
| Upper Beginner/ Elementary | Understanding is assisted with visual aids, slow speech and gestures. May repeat questions and phrases instead of responding to them. Broken speech using personal details. High frequency words can be written in basic sentence structures. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - can - past of verb 'to be' - past simple affirmative, negative and affirmative - present continuous - going to - comparatives and superlatives - some, any - adverbs of frequency and manner |

| | | |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Pre-Intermediate | At this stage, students are better at listening than speaking. They will recognise key words. Tenses begin to be used more and they can communicate with partial success. Students have developed writing ability so they can fill in forms and write short messages. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - past continuous - present perfect simple - articles - zero and first conditional - should, may, might (formal and informal) 'will' future - must and have to, don't have to - quantifiers - 'have' and 'have got' - question tags |
| Intermediate | Students are able to respond to questions and speak more quickly. They can communicate but still make errors. They will know most of the grammar tenses and structures and will have a good level of vocabulary. Can perform extended writing tasks. Often students reach a learning plateau. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - present perfect continuous - second conditional passive - in present and past perfect - make, let, allow used to, be used to phrasal verbs gerund or infinitive - relative clauses |
| Upper Intermediate | In a familiar context, students can operate successfully with minor misunderstandings. Fewer hesitations and longer conversations, with problems understanding idiomatic expressions. Can write longer passages of writing with cohesion, with errors only on complex structures. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - third and mixed - conditionals reported - speech reported questions - be used to doing UK and USA English - Future continuous |
| Advanced | Most conversation is understood and concentration can be maintained for substantial periods of time over a range of topics. They have confidence and ability to change and initiate topics, can keep the flow of a conversation going, but not yet fluent. Organisation and structure of writing carries expressions clearly. Only small mistakes are made. Wide and idiomatic vocabulary. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "the" comparatives modals of deduction negotiating skills, problem solving, decision making connectors - defining and non-defining relative clauses |

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Student Interests and Motivations

You are probably starting to get the idea that the ESL students you are going to teach overseas will be from a diverse range of backgrounds, will have varying language skills, and different goals in mind for the future. You will often need to take time to build trust and understanding between you and your students- you will be very different to their local teachers in appearance, in teaching style and of course in the language that you speak. It will take patience and empathy on your part to develop a good rapport and friendship with your students, but in doing so, the experience for both you and them will be very rewarding. In order to build this rapport and understanding, it's useful to get to know what your students' interests are outside of class, as well as what their motivations for coming to class actually are. The interests and motivations of your students will vary from class to class and even from student to student within that class. Think for a moment about some of your own interests and pastimes. Perhaps you love to surf; or go to the gym; or go bike riding. Maybe you collect stamps; or DVDs; or musical instruments. You may love playing soccer; or playing guitar; or playing with your children, nieces or nephews. The interests and hobbies that exist are as diverse as the people taking this course!

The same thing goes for motivations. What are your motivations, your reasons, for taking this course? Maybe you want to travel? Or save money? Give something back to people in poorer countries? Learn a new language? Become a better teacher? Again, there are many different reasons! It will be the same with your students. Obviously, the reasons that students in a Business English class have for learning English will be very different to the reasons that an 8-year-old primary school student will have. In fact, it's likely that a small child is not motivated by any reason of their own! If this is the case, taking the time to talk to your students, and really getting to know their names (or nicknames!), and their interests outside of class will help to keep this type of student engaged and enthusiastic. Every lesson you teach, whether it be to the business people in Korea or to children in Africa, you will need to make your lessons fun and relevant. And this is where knowing your students' interests comes in. If you are teaching content that is relevant, you will find that your job becomes much easier! A 14-year-old in a compulsory English class can be motivated if you are teaching them English the way they want to learn. At the same time, if you start teaching some highly motivated EAP students content that is irrelevant to their goals in that course, you might find their motivation to come to class dwindles.

The individual interests and motivations of your students will really affect the content of your lessons. You can teach the same grammar form in many different ways dependent upon what your class will find interesting. Taking the time to find your students' interests and goals will really make you a great teacher who is well-liked by your class!

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