

# Teaching Philosophy

Bich Nguyen | ESL Teacher & M.A. TESOL Candidate

Teaching, to me, is not the one-directional transfer of knowledge from teacher to student. It is a relationship built on meaningful interaction — one in which roles are not fixed, and both people in the classroom are changed by the exchange. Students come to see the world, and their place in it, as larger than they had imagined. Teachers, in turn, come to see themselves as capable of helping students reach further than they thought possible. My philosophy of teaching rests on five core beliefs — that teaching is empowering, that students deserve respect, that education exists to produce real improvement in knowledge and skill, that responsibility is shared between teacher and student, and that learning can only flourish in a safe environment. These beliefs shape how I plan lessons, how I interact with students, and how I approach each of the four language skills and grammar in the ESL classroom.

## Core Beliefs

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### *Teaching Is Empowering*

Meaningful interaction between teacher and student is the heart of the classroom, and that interaction is not limited by the roles each person occupies. A teacher is not simply a source of information, and a student is not simply a recipient of it. When teachers and students engage authentically with one another, students begin to see the world beyond the classroom walls, and their sense of what is possible for their own lives grows. At the same time, teachers grow too: guiding students toward their goals pushes teachers to see their own potential and purpose more clearly. I try to create space in every lesson for this kind of exchange, so that teaching becomes an act of empowerment for both sides of the relationship.

### *Students Deserve Respect*

I do not see the teacher-student relationship as a hierarchy in which the teacher holds all the knowledge and the student holds none. Students bring real value to every lesson and every classroom. They help one another learn, and, just as importantly, they help me become a better teacher over time through their questions, their feedback, and the perspectives they bring. Because of this, students deserve to be treated with genuine respect in every educational setting — not as empty vessels waiting to be filled, but as capable individuals with insight to contribute.

### *Improvement and Knowledge*

The purpose of education is measurable improvement in knowledge and skill. This matters because, without real gains in knowledge, students cannot reach their full potential. I hold myself accountable to this outcome: every lesson, activity, and assessment I design is meant to move students demonstrably forward, not simply to fill class time. Growth — visible, trackable growth — is the standard by which I judge my own teaching.

### *Shared Responsibility*

Both teacher and student carry responsibility for what happens in the classroom. As the teacher, I commit fully to every instructional task I take on — planning thoughtfully, teaching consistently, and following through on the commitments I make to my students. At the same time, I expect students to take ownership of their own learning. Growth in language proficiency requires effort outside of class, honest self-assessment, and a willingness to engage — responsibilities that belong to the student and that I work to cultivate rather than replace.

### *A Safe Environment*

Students learn best when they feel secure enough to take risks. A safe classroom environment gives students the confidence to express themselves, to admit what they do not yet know, and to try skills they have not yet mastered without fear of judgment. Building that safety is one of my first priorities in any course, because without it, students hold back — and holding back is the enemy of language learning, which depends on production, mistakes, and revision.

## Philosophy in Practice: Skill-Specific Approaches

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These core beliefs shape not only how I relate to students, but how I teach each language skill. My approach to speaking, listening, writing, reading, and grammar is grounded in the same commitment to authentic, meaningful, student-centered learning.

### ***Speaking***

Speaking instruction should prioritize authenticity and output. Students need real opportunities to speak — not to recite — and I build my speaking lessons around task-based activities that mirror genuine communication. Enough guided input matters too, but the ultimate goal is always production: getting students speaking in situations that resemble the real communicative demands they will face outside the classroom.

### ***Listening***

Effective listening instruction begins with basic linguistic knowledge — pronunciation and phonics — because students cannot comprehend what they cannot decode. From that foundation, I build listening skills and strategies using authentic materials, so that students are training their ears on the same kind of language they will actually encounter in the world, not simplified or artificial speech.

### ***Writing***

In writing instruction, process matters more than product. Rather than judging students solely on a finished piece, I emphasize the stages that lead there — planning, drafting, receiving feedback, and revising. This process-oriented approach treats writing as a skill developed through iteration, and it gives students room to improve rather than simply be graded.

### ***Reading***

Reading instruction should build basic linguistic knowledge, including syntax, alongside concrete reading strategies. Students need both the underlying language competence to parse a text and the strategic tools — skimming, scanning, predicting, inferring — to read efficiently and with comprehension. I teach these together, rather than assuming one will develop without the other.

### ***Grammar***

Grammar is best taught in context. I favor authenticity and production over isolated drills, teaching grammatical structures as they arise in real communication and giving students opportunities to produce the target forms themselves. Grammar, in my classroom, is a tool for clearer communication — not an abstract system to be memorized apart from its use.