

Statement of Purpose

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I dismissed the thought of pursuing my study for a master's degree soon after I graduated from university because I lacked the motivation required; moreover, I had no idea what I would have chosen to study. It seemed all too ironic that the decision would emerge eleven years later. Yet, somehow, I feel now is an even better time to return to school because I know exactly what I want to study and why. And I am determined not to rest until I have reached the goal.

Upon my graduation in 1975, I secured a job as secretary to the Vice President of RCA Taiwan Ltd.. But I soon found this kind of office work unappealing to me. The~ turning point came when my sister, who was teaching English in high school, asked me to substitute for one of her colleagues. I immediately fell in love with teaching. It was more challenging than the routine of doing secretarial work. I began to teach English at Hung-Dow High School in September, 1978. And since then, I have been teaching English at the King-O College of Commerce, St. John's Institute, the Gram English Center and the English Language Service International. Among the more than five hundred students I have taught, there have been teenagers, working people, housewives, and even some children. Put to my great regret, I found the most difficult task for me in teaching English to Chinese students has been to get them to speak, despite the fact that some of them have studied English for more than ten years. I feel one with them because I went through the same experience as a student. I can still recall the scene in our English classroom: the teacher would spend most of the time explaining the vocabulary and grammar rules in Chinese while some 50 students would just sit there listening. They hardly had any chances to train their ears to listen to English, let alone to speak. And the reason for all the spoonfeeding of students was to get them admitted into the next level of education. In the end, some students, of course, would succeed in the entrance exam, but by then they would have lost their interest in studying English because it would never have occurred to them that learning a foreign language could be fun.

Learning a foreign language is the way to communicate with people from other countries and an easy access to another culture. I've always strived my best to help students to improve their listening and speaking abilities. However, I still feel from time to time that I lack mastery in the more progressive methodologies of teaching a foreign language. That's why I have finally decided to continue my study in the States.

My principal interests are in TESOL, Linguistics, and Bilingual Studies. After I finish my graduate studies, I plan to return to Taiwan to devote myself again to English language teaching.

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