

In the era of globalization, it is of great importance to learn English. As an international language, English is widely used as the means of communication with people from different countries. People recognize the need of having English competence. Therefore, it is necessary to provide English education for children since their early age. The purpose is to prepare the children so they can succeed in the global competition in the future.

For my apprenticeship, I choose a job as a teacher assistant because I want to help children to learn English. I notice that KIDS 2 SUCCESS as a private language course, which is located at Taman Kopo Indah II Ruko 2A – 55, is an appropriate place to fulfill my desire to help children's education since their early age.

KIDS 2 SUCCESS, which has adopted the curriculum from KIDS 2 SUCCESS in America, has a good quality to provide English education. This language course is a suitable place to facilitate the children to learn English. Children between 3 -15 years old can join this language course. In addition, KIDS 2 SUCCESS has good teaching staff with reliable competence to support children's education in learning English.

In order to work as a teacher assistant at KIDS 2 SUCCESS, the candidates have to meet some requirements. First, he or she is a graduate or still studying at D3 or S1 English Programme. Second, he or she likes to teach children. Third, he or she must be creative and discipline. Fourth, he or she must be able to work in a team.

During my apprenticeship programme from January – February 2007, I have a routine schedule. As for my routine, I teach 4 classes each week and the duration for each class is 90 minutes. Those classes have different level of students namely Runners, Sprinters and Jumpers. The grouping of students is based on the placement test. My schedules of teaching are on Tuesday from 2 – 3.30 p.m, Thursday from 2 – 3.30 p.m, Saturday from 2.30 – 4 p.m and 4 – 5.30 p.m. There are 2 to 6 students in each class. After the class, the children have 15 minutes to play inside or outside the class. Every month, they will watch a film for one class session. In January, they watched a film entitled 'The Pacifier'.

On the first day of my apprenticeship programme, I was given a chance to watch closely the activity of the class and adapt with the work area. I observed the learning teaching process, such as the way of teaching and the classroom control. I also learnt the teaching method and how to operate the teaching equipment, such as Mimio. Mimio is a tool for learning process. Mimio's program should be installed in the computer, and then by using an LCD projector, the teaching materials will be displayed on the whiteboard. The children use a Mimio marker to do the exercise on the whiteboard such as: matching the pictures with the definition or completing a puzzle.

As a teacher assistant, I have a responsibility to watch over the students when they do their activities inside or outside the class. Inside the class, I help and teach children how to write and spell the difficult words in English. I also help the children who cannot concentrate well so that they will be more serious during the lesson activity. Outside the class, I have to keep an eye on the children when they are playing so that they will not get hurt or injured, for example: falling from the stairs.

My dominating activities are helping the teacher to handle the children and keeping an eye on the students inside or outside the class. I also help the teacher to prepare the teaching materials and equipment.

In doing the apprenticeship programme, I could apply the knowledge that I learnt during my studies at D3 English Programme such as Pronunciation, Speaking in Action and Teaching English to Young Learners. Learning Pronunciation has enabled me to help the students pronounce the words in English correctly. I practice my speaking skill when I talk with the teachers or the students inside and outside the classroom. In Teaching English to Young Learners class, I conducted a peer teaching which helped me to practice how to teach the children.

After having finished my apprenticeship programme, I find it important to evaluate my performance. I think that I can adapt to a new environment very well, work well with the teacher staff and I am quick to learn new things. On the contrary, sometimes I have a difficulty finding the exact meaning of words in English. I also have a difficulty handling and dealing with the children between 3 – 6 years old. Sometimes, it is difficult to control children of that age because they are very active and always do whatever they want, for example: they disturb or talk with another student during the lesson activity.

To handle the problems in the class, the teachers have one good solution. The teachers believe that giving rewards for appropriate behaviour can be useful in teaching children. In every class session, the children will get four stamps in a paper sheet. The students can exchange the stamps they have with the rewards, such as: stickers, erasers, bags or toys. Giving the rewards can motivate the students to study harder and be more serious in class. They will get an extra stamp if they can answer the question or be active during the lesson activity.

Therefore, the extra stamp is given based on the teacher's evaluation. Besides, the teacher can cut the student's stamp if they are naughty or do not pay attention in the classroom; it depends on the student's behaviour.

In conclusion, the apprenticeship programme is very useful because it gives me the opportunity to get a valuable work experience. During my apprenticeship period, I learn how to work together as a team and how to adapt myself into a new working environment. Besides, I also learn about how to select activities for children, for example: matching the words and the pictures is suitable for children between 3 – 6 years old. In addition, I learn how to be responsible for accomplishing my work.

I would like to give some suggestion for the institution and D3 Networking. For KIDS 2 SUCCESS, I suggest that the teachers should increase the use of English in order to motivate the students to communicate in English with one another. It will help the students to learn English faster. For D3 Networking, I suggest that D3 Networking should provide more information about the places for apprenticeship so that the students will have more options for this programme.