

A transition to Language Coach

Interview with Aleksandra Marta Misinska, English teacher, Spain



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Can you describe your professional career before taking the language coaching certification (LCC)?

I have been teaching in Spanish private language schools since 2015. I obtained the Cambridge CELTA teaching qualification in 2016. I mainly teach adults, some teenagers and rarely children.

How did you find the course?

It was a mind-blowing experience. For me the neuroscience part was revolutionary, I realised how little I’d known about our brain, the reasons for our behaviour and the importance of motivation. Before the course I had felt frustrated about teaching because many methods and approaches I had tried never seemed to work as perfectly as claimed to be and students’ motivation and commitment did not last long. Now I have all the answers I had been looking for a long time!

Which highlights or insights did you gain from the LCC?

The two most important ones would be motivation and the perfect learning state. Motivation as the key, nevertheless, we shouldn’t motivate learners as every person carries their motivation inside. We just need to help them realise it, create a vivid image of it and use it as a reminder to continue learning and maintaining a positive approach to eventually succeed in language learning. “Energy flows where attention goes”, keeping students’ brain calm as a prerequisite. Otherwise, no matter how great one’s teaching skills might be, a student won’t learn anything unless the perfect environment is created – a fascinating fact of which importance I wasn’t aware.

What was the immediate impact on your way of teaching after taking the course?

I have changed the way of asking questions, I'd rather use 'How..?' or 'What's the reason for...?' and definitely stop finishing their sentences (unless they ask me to). That gives student's more space to express their ideas, more talking time and brain exercise. Active listening, trying to stop getting distracted by my judgmental thoughts or thinking what to say next. As a result, I can understand my students' needs better.

Were there any impacts on your personal life during or after the course?

After the course, definitely. Becoming a better listener and being less judgmental is helping me communicate more effectively with my partner and family members.

How was your professional development after the course?

I really look forward to masterclasses and workshops delivered by Rachel to keep up-to-date with the coaching practice as well as I follow the ELC team in the social media. I am in touch with a colleague from the LCC course and we keep supporting each other and helping each other out with our further development. I would also like to continue with the LCC Advanced course soon but in the meantime, I'm reading David Rock's 'Brain at Work' and afterwards I will deal with the rest of the neuroscience books on my reading list.

How has the course changed the way you deliver a language course?

Delivering grammar is one of the most significant differences between coaching and traditional teaching, and probably one of the most difficult elements to introduce in coaching practice. Getting rid of old habits takes time and plenty of energy but the outcomes are fascinating.

"Since I've completed the LCC course, I started using coaching, brain-based coaching principles and different language learning methodologies as vehicles throughout coaching conversations which concentrate on my client's real personal needs, interests and goals"

Were there any impacts on your learners?

I feel that they take more responsibility of their learning process so somehow it makes me feel less stressed and conscious about my performance. The learning journey is being done their way, they are more engaged and into the language. Grammar teaching in coaching is more of an engaging discovery and an interesting conversation rather than a dull explanation.

Is there any additional information that you would like to add?

I wish they taught neuroscience at schools. If they did, the world would definitely be a better place. I also believe that the Neurolanguage Coaching approach is the future of language learning because it really works!!!

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