**My experience was a success or a failure?**

I have been interested in English ever since I was a middle school student. In every English class, the Engilsh teacher asked me to stand up and told me to read and translate the lesson which we had to learn in the textbook at that time. The teacher used to compliment “You read it very well”. My English score was always good. I entered High school and my English score was still good. But problem was that I was weak in mock test which we had to go through every month or every quarter. I could do pretty well in mid term exam and final one but I got poor score in mock tests. Because those mid and final exams dealt with textbooks and tests’ contents included the lessons which we had learned in the textbooks. A big problem in my English was that I lacked basic grammar and quick reading skill. Luckily, I got a good score in the College Scholastic Ability Test but my weak English skill did not get better. Because it could not be quickly and easily conquered. But I got a perfect score in Freshman English in college due to its easiness. And then during the graduate school period, I got a chance to guide a Danish deligation in Muju-Chonju Winter Universiade. It was physically a tiring work but rewarding and fulfilling experience. It was my first experience to meet foreigner using English in reality. I had to interpret for them when touring the city or guiding or having food together. My English skill was very poor but they understood me. Danish deligation consisted of 3 people. A Chief of deligation, a coach, a male figure skater. I cheered the athlete in the ice rink with raising up the catchphrase. Through this experience, I realized I had to go far to do English well. After that, I often went to English Lab and practiced a lot. I focused on speaking aloud and memorizing practical expressions. I still remember those expressions I memorized at that time. After graduating graduate school, I went through a few jobs. But I liked English Teacher. I worked at telephone English company for three years. My skill was still poor at first but my team leader chose me. I guess, she decided to choose me due to my enthusiasm. The saying ‘Teaching is learning’ is really true. I learned a lot from it. I had to prepare a lot to teach children and had to study. My listening skill improved and I watched many English programs.

Sometimes I took lessons from native teachers from other companys.

When recalling my past in learning English, all procedures were way necessary. If I didn’t go through them, as a Teacher I might not be here like today. Yes, our English education system was poor. It focused on reading and translating, sometimes they tested our listening skill. But it was not enough. Their teaching methods were teacher centered as well. So, many Korean people can’t not speak and listen to what they hear well in English even after graduating colleges. Many people criticize our system. Yes, I can understand them. We can say they might be some sacrifices of poor system. If it’s true it’s natural for them to speak up their mind frankly. Our system and environment are changing a lot and our education authorities are trying very hard. Now it’s time for us to adapt ourselves to new English environment rather than criticizing it. Plus we should make a great effort so that our next generations can learn English effectively and easily as well as ourselves. I hear that some English teachers who are not confident of their skills are afraid of confronting the native teachers in school for fear of disclosure of their poor pronunciation. I guess they should do their best to improve their skills too. They were taught English by traditional method. They should not stick to their own traditional teaching skill but should accept new method. They should not have a fear of changing themselves as teachers and should apply new method to their classroom. Our government already tried to change English educational system and is still doing many things for that. If someone ask me to choose one method between traditional and modern teaching method, I would choose the latter without hesitation. I don’t want to deny or ignore my past English method, but I can not deny that modern English education method is more effective.

These days, almost schools have their own native English teachers and they use many good materials. Furthermore, many children go abroad to learn English during vacations and when we go to book stores, they overflow with various books written in English and self-teaching books. We don’t need to conform to custom in learning English anymore. It’s because just rather than reading and translating, confronting native speakers and talking with them is more effective and rather than studying with textbooks, studying with various books is more effective.

If someone asks me “Your method that you already experienced in the past was success or failure?”, I’ll say “I could not evaluate it at that time but now I confess it was failure and success at the same. As long as we don’t go abroad to study English, we have to find our own effective ways. Trial and error is inevitably passage rite. One could be a failure at that time in the short run, in the long run, it was also a success.

I’m still running toward the success because we can notice that society is developing and English learning and teaching methodology too.

The problem is that teachers must do their best in self developing and student also do best in learing and get rid of fears.

I think there is no failure in learing something in the long run, especially in English. But we have to keep in our mind that we should shorten our trials and errors in learning it. So, it’s important to listen to what pioneers said about their experiences and to apply it to our lives. Then, you can find what really fits you.