

**My experience of second language acquisition**

***Class :*** *TESOL 73rd*

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**“Children have to be educated, but they also have to be left to educate themselves “ - Ernest Dimnet –**

**Introduction**

**I’ve always been interested in English. English has been not only a language to help me communicate with other countries but also a friend to help me see the world with an open mind. I used to be quite conservative at some points.**

**Owing to this assignment, I have a chance to recall my childhood and adolescence..**

**In this paper, I’ll write about my own experience of second language learning, relating 5 characteristics of adult learners, traditional and modern classrooms, teacher type, and effective teaching.**

**Body**

**My first English teacher was TV. I enjoyed watching the sesame street, the guiding light, the general hospital on AFKN when I was 9 or 10 years old. I didn’t understand the episode, however, it was really interesting for me to watch them and listen to the sound of English at that time.**

**From that time on, I started to have an interest in English. I wanted to read, write, listen and speak in English. Beyond these, I wanted to be a simultaneous interpreter after watching someone translating Korean into English on the TV show. It looked quite awesome to me.**

**I think I was a goal-oriented person, even though I was pretty young (at age 10).**

**I knew what I wanted to be surely. So I asked my mom to find me an English teacher.**

**1. An enabler in modern classroom.**

**Mr. Kim was my first English teacher, who was enthusiastic, honest and knew the subject matter very well. He was an enabler and the environment of the classroom was pretty modern, although it was almost 30 years ago.**

**I studied English with many story books. He always gave us reading assignments before reading that book with him. Then we had to find out the meaning of words we didn’t know, read the story 3 times and listen to it 5 times before we went to LABO( the name of the organization). I don’t remember what it stands for.**

**The class was totally students centered with many activities. He tried to make us speak in English as possible as he could. He made us guess the words meaning, the story line, the lessons we could get from that story. In this case he was a good involver. I’d never memorized English words or sentences, writing on the paper at that time. We did lots of role-plays so we could remember the story, sentences, and words in English naturally and easily. We were more involved through the group works (many games and role-plays) and it let us have more ownership for our education. He was the best teacher that I’ve ever had.**

**Thanks to him, “English” is not just a language but a friend for my life.**

**2. Explainers in traditional classrooms.**

**When I became a middle school student, I was really disappointed with the English class. Precisely speaking, I was angry at the Korean education system. I met 6 English teachers from the middle school to the high school. They were just explainers, using “ jug and mug” approach. They didn’t care that we were following or not. They just explained the grammar, key expressions and words.**

**Because all the English classes I took at school were teacher centered, I found them boring and annoying. Even though they knew the subject matter very well like Mr. Kim, they didn’t give me any clear, positive feedback at all and didn’t listen to their students. We couldn’t communicate each other in the classroom.**

**I was a passive listener and they were just explainers. What I did in the classroom was reading the text books and taking notes what they said or wrote on the board.**

**The only way to check my English level was to take mid-term and final exams.**

**To get a good grade I had to focus on memorizing the grammar or key sentences and words. So I didn’t pay any attention to my English class at all. I seemed to lose my interest in English due to these teaching environments at those days.**

**Conclusion**

**I have two different experiences, which are very contrary to each other.**

**Due to the concepts that I’ve learned from the module 1, I found out why the English class with Mr. Kim was good and effective and what was wrong with the Korean education system.**

**In the former case, the English teacher, Mr. Kim was a good enabler who could draw out student’s ability. Besides he really listened to his students and empathized with their problems. But in the latter case, teachers were only explainers, who knew the subject matter very well but didn’t listen to their students. During the rest of my TESOL course, I will keep that in mind and I will do my best to be a good teacher like Mr. Kim.**