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Essay #1

TESOL WD #81

First experience in my ESL classroom

Will Durant said that education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance. As I grow and know something more, I realize that I cannot know everything.

On 2008, I went to Pierce College located in Lakewood, Washington State. Of course I took a language course as I arrived there. Even though I feel my second language learning experience was a success, I quite do not remember how I study and what situation I was on, so I want to try to recollect my memories and describe my language class environment as much as possible.

When it comes to the characteristics of adult learners, for me as an adult, my language class was big part of my life. I think I was so goal-oriented at that time because I was on the start point of my long way of studying in U.S. and I considered it as a time to get used to American life. That also is related to the characteristic of adult: “Adults are autonomous and self-directed”. Even though I was busy with enjoying different kinds of experiences in U.S., I was not off my attention to keep up with my language course. I think my motivation and reasons to come to U.S. were the power to finish the class without any problems.

Looking back to my ESL experience, the classroom had something that was like traditional classroom and some others that was like modern class. I had a Japanese teacher in writing/grammar class, who immigrated to U.S. when she was high school. I think the teaching style was more like Korean traditional style since Japanese and Korean share similar culture. In the class, we were engaged in traditional works such as filling in the blanks using right form of grammar or multiple questions. She did not seem to have any problem with speaking in English but she only taught what was in the book. I think she should have tried to share her personal experience and communicate with student to facilitate the classroom environment. I remember one of other teachers named Bob. He was an old guy, and I guess he was over 50 years old. The reason that made me consider his age was he kept forgetting the assignments and making grammatical mistakes. However, I think I felt his consideration for class and caring heart and it was big part to make us follow his direction.

Effective teaching skills that remained on my memory were video-taking project and a variety of chance to present in front of the class. Thinking relating to Learner Retention with those class projects, through shooting video we, students, practiced how to speak in English most similar to native speaker and that was kind of experiential learning. In speaking class, the classroom teacher asked us give a 2 or 3 minutes of short speeches. Sometimes we explained about a specific topic or shared our previous experience through the presentations. I think It was kind of teaching and mentoring others which have 90 percent of learner retention. From my experience the contents that I presented to the class remained the most and the longest.

Word Count: 534