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 **My late, but meaningful steps for English**

“It is never too late to learn”. I love this saying because I am one of them who start to study English late. After I finished military service, I started to learn English as a double major since September, 2011. It was not easy because I stopped studying English after I graduated high school, and I’ve never been to go abroad to study English. Also, learning other languages is not a piece of cake. It takes really long time and needs effort. It was really hard to decide learning this language again because I knew it’ll be hard time. Anyway, I started it and I’m still enjoying learning. The reason why I can keep studying this language is that I met many good teachers, and they help me in various ways.

When we learn something, someone who teaches you is really important. As Carl Rogers said, there are 3 characteristics for effective teaching: **Respect, Empathy and Authenticity**. It means teachers should consider these things when they meet students. I want to tell you my best teacher. My teacher ‘Carla’, who was my native conversation teacher, has all these characteristics. She was my man-to-man teacher for 4 weeks, from January 6th, 2013 to February 1st, 2013. When I met her for the first time, in a classroom, she tried to make comfortable atmosphere for me. This environment made me easy to speak English, and I didn’t have to be afraid of making mistakes. When I had troubles with speaking, then she helped me with kindness. She knew how to **respect** students in the classroom. The teacher knew what is good for students in conversation class. She gave me more and more chances to practice speaking English. Her class was based on student-centered classroom. Speaking is a productive skill, so she thought I should make this class. It is really important point in language learning. How can babies learn their native languages without practicing? She always tried to make good conditions to practice speaking English for me. In short, she was “**The enabler**”. Also, we shared many things during this time. I said many things about my life, and so did she. I said many problems about learning this language because I started to learn English late. She really **empathized** with my situation and told me her experience about studying Korean. With her empathizing, I could tell my weakness easily because I believed she could understand what I mean. She didn’t hide herself behind her job title. She showed me her **authenticity**. With these her efforts, I could say my opinion in English freely, and she could establish good rapport with me. As a result, I kept an open mind to her and I received any kinds of advices without hesitation. She showed me what is a good teacher, and still, I keep in touch with her. She always cheered me up and gave me motivation even though I was a late learner.

However, I didn’t have only good teachers. I also have bad experience with some teachers. Let me tell you about my worst teacher. My teacher ‘John Doe’ is an English teacher. He was a conversation teacher, too. I took his class with some students from September, 2012 to December, 2012. In conversation class, students should have many chances to speak English, but we had only a little time to speak something. In other words, he was an **one-way communicator**. When students made mistakes, he stopped their saying, and he wrote something to correct errors. Of course, it is an important feedback in the class, but it was too strict. He was so talkative, so we spent most of the time with just listening to what he said. It was a totally **teacher-centered class**. When we had a class with controversial ideas, he continuously said his idea to students who had opposite opinion with him. Finally, most of students were depressed by his saying, and they didn’t want to say anything in his class. In addition, he ignored some students who couldn’t speak well. He really didn’t like to say slowly, but students were not native speakers, he had to understand his students. He didn’t give many chances to them, and they started to lose interest in his class. It was kind of biased teaching, and finally, some of them quit the class. He didn’t know how to respect students, and he didn’t treat students with Empathy and Authenticity. Actually, he wasn’t any kinds of teacher such as the instructor, the involver or the enabler. He was just pretending to be a teacher to make his money.

During the time, which I studied, I was able to learn both English and qualities of a good teacher. After I complete this course, it will be my turn. I want them to enjoy studying English in my class. It was nice time to write this essay because I could remind me of the goal ‘good teacher’ again.