**My Experience Learning English**

**TESOL Essay 1 Class87 WD T Stella (Min Kyung CHO)**

Private English language education costs are increasing every year in Korea. A recent report says that Koreans spend over 15 trillion won for private education a year. However, despite the educational fever of Koreans, we ranked one hundred twenty-one in TOEFL test among the One hundred forty four countries. It is definitely shocking news because we spent over ten years and spent 15 trillion won for English education. They picked some reasons why we failed in speaking English.

First of all, Koreans never use English out of the classroom. Because we don’t have to speak in English after school and also there are zero places to use the language. That means we need to be surrounded by an English-friendly environment to learn the language. Now I would like to share my experience in the past learning English.

I can say there are two types of English environment that I was in. One is in my public schools including elementary school, middle school and high school. The other one is in Language school, Australia. Which one was helpful for me? I carefully choose when I was in Australia. Put simply, public schools English education system was STUDY but Language school in Australia’s system was LIFE for me. Let me explain about this. In public school, teachers made us to think English is only a tool to get a good grade or to enter University. So the lesson should be boring and strict. On the other hand, Language schools showed me that English can be so much fun and it can be one of the great social communication skills. It showed how to approach English makes a huge difference.

The school teacher’s approach did not work well with me. I could say it was a negative experience for me. We don’t learn our first language. At least it does not require study and money. It just happened so naturally. For example, babies hear the sound, find the reasons, wonder how it works, and repeat what they heard; and this is the learning process. However, English is my second language. It should be more fun and active and different than when we pick up the first language. Unfortunately most of English classes were horrible. All classes focused on grammar, memorization, and books. I had no idea why we were learning English and so much vocabulary that we don’t use in real life. If I ask some questions then anger came to me as an answer. The other student’s situation was the same as mine. No passion, no motivation, no Empathy from my teachers. They were just stood up there and reading same stuff and made us memorize English. How come that sounds good? Even if, they don’t have enough teaching equipment back then, I’m sure there is more that they can try to make better classes for students. I had ten years of study of English at school but it turned out like I did nothing. After ten years of study, I could not have a conversation in English. That is why I felt public English education system was such a negative experience.

The language school in Australia was a whole new approach to study English for me. When I went there, I knew very small amount of English to communicate. For example, I had to think three hours to ask where the dining room was. Life in Sydney was survival and struggling with my English. As soon as I stepped in the language school, I was amazed by the learning environment. Text books, memorization and vocabulary were the only methods that I knew about studying English. But we did not study just text books; the teacher used the variety of teaching equipment like power-point, newspapers, team projects, novels, music, games, discussion etc. I use what I learned in the classroom and outside of the classroom too. I think it was a good environment to study English. Because it was just not studying English words, I was extending my English to my life. I study hard in language school and after class, I joined the cooking club, met a lot of people at parties too. I try not to be shy to talk with people and enjoy it as much as I can. It was great experience for me to gain confidence and learn English abroad.

Such experiences helped me to have ideal thoughts on how to teach English or approach it. In my opinion, great teachers should provide the tools that students can grow in their thinking and ask the right questions to lead to the student’s motivation. The only way they will be able to do this, is to have a good environment such as an entertaining lesson, proper use of equipment, and qualified teachers. From my experiences, I realized what kind of teacher I want to be. I will be the involver or enabler type of teacher. I always felt interested when the teacher taught me with visual aids but it was not helpful before I do it or experience it by myself. So I love to share my opinion on topics and give them many options to think about it (power-point, posters, video clips, etc...) and let them find the answers. Again, English is my second language and I know what the student’s problem is and I have perfect condition to be a teacher if I study more with love and passion. I wish to be the good helper for my future students.