I still remember my 1st English class in the institute when I was 12. My class mates and I were waiting for entering the middle school in the coming spring and we hadn’t had the subject of English in the elementary curriculum at the time. I was so excited with the new language learning.

The first session was about the alphabet. The teacher taught from A to Z making us use all of 4 skills – we learned the sound of each letter as repeating after him (listening and speaking) and we wrote down the alphabet on the notebook as reading out the letter’s name(reading and writing).

But there was one problem in that class. It was a mixed-level class, grouped by age. I didn’t know that there were some students who had learned until I heard my friend who was sitting next to me introduced himself in English. He had been learning since he was 10. It gave me a big frustration as I felt “I’m behind them.” My motivation for learning was externally given to get a higher score as a good student. But it seemed hard to be the top in the class so that I lost my will to study.

As time goes by, the situation got worse. In the 2nd grade, we’d started learning more about grammar which wasn’t so interesting. To make the matter worse, my new English teacher had very traditional way of teaching. She really did only ‘chalk and talk’ by herself. No one could be a kind of participants in that class. That ‘Explainer’ left us only this idea, ‘English is boring.’

After many years, I had another external motivation to continue studying English for more important exam ‘CSAT (College Scholastic Ability Test)’. This time, God blessed me with a great teacher who has a teaching skill of ‘Involver’. He’d tried to shorten the explanation of grammar as much as he could and given us more opportunities to apply the grammatic rules in the practical use of sentences. And he also made students to be part of the class as we spoke out new vocabularies and gave him the answers to his eliciting questions. This class changed my mind to make a decision for acquiring English as my 2nd language and majoring English literature in the university

During my days in the university, I realized that I wouldn’t be able to improve my speaking skill through studying American & British novels, poems, and plays. They were more about reading and writing. So I enrolled a course of English conversation at the academy. At that time, I was motivated by myself as an adult learner. My teacher was also trying to treat me and other class mates as equals and showed her respects to us. Besides, the atmosphere of our class was active for all of us were involved in the conversation. The teacher knew what we were doing and chose appropriate topics every day to relate them to our own lives’ stories and experiences. My goal was to speak fluent English but it still seemed far from me. But I wasn’t disappointed for I knew it wouldn’t be happened within a short while.

As I graduated, I chose to be an English teacher in the private academy for elementary students. I didn’t speak fluent English yet, I was confident to be a good teacher since I knew that ‘Speaking good English doesn’t mean teaching it well.’ I tried to master what I was going to teach that day. I had to memorize many words and sentences and make myself to be ready enough to teach others. Eventually I realized it was the best way of learning. I could find myself full of confidence at the same time less of errors in a conversation with other English speakers. I’m so thankful for many opportunities that grew and improved my English skills.