My second language acquisition and how we can be a good teacher

97th WK Sujin Lee(Jin)

Have you ever seen a school of dolphins jumping in the air and sea lions lying on the pier in San Francisco? You should visit San Francisco and see what I mentioned. San Francisco is the first city where I learned English in America. When I stepped on America, I was afraid of everything. My English was limited and I had little confidence of speaking English even though I had studied English throughout school years. After my studying in the U.S.A., However, I have improved my English and I have more self-confidence to speak English since I had great lessons in there.

The first class in San Francisco, I met twelve friends from different countries and a teacher, Alex, from New York. The lesson used to begin with Alex’s explanation. In this regard it was kind of similar as my high school lessons, but it was conducted by English instead of Korean and it has lots of activities. Moreover, it was quite different from the English class in Korea. I used to write down what teacher said and I did not have much chance to speak out what I learned at the class time in Korea. It was kind of ‘chalk and talk’ class. On the other hand, the class in America had more students talking time than teacher talking time. We discussed our topics and share the ideas all together. Even though I learned same subject as Korea, it came to me differently. At first, I was embarrassed to tell my opinion, but somehow I adapted well to the class. We concentrated and tried to absorb what he said since we were self motivated students deciding to go abroad to learn English in the best way. We learned new expressions everyday and practiced by using the expressions. He knew the student’s common mistakes and was good at error correcting. However, I think he did not know how the students felt when they made a mistake and were pointed out. The class had 12 students and it would be difficult for him to control and care about every student. We knew he tried to understand and respect us, but he might not know our position that we learned English as a second language since he is a native speaker. However, he was a good guide to lead us the correct way to learn English even though he was little sophisticated to read student’s mind. He did not pretend to understand us completely and he just showed that who he is (he is from New York) and he is very proud of his teaching skills. Judging from my experience, I think that the lessons’ contents are very important, but the more important thing is who is going to lead the lessons. Even though there are same curriculums and textbooks, the classes may be different since they are depends on teaching person. The teachers should know what students want and how they learn. If they could not understand their students, they might not be good teachers.

I think we can be a good teacher based on my experience since we learned English as a second language, so we know how students would feel and what they might think about our lessons. We have already known the difficulties to learn a second language and we can understand the students’ feeling. I think that the most effective way to teach is understand the students and treat them sincerely. The teacher used to be a student, too. We should not forget when we learned from teachers and the experiences would be great assets to understand the students. There are always trials and errors. We learned from our experience and the experience made us more mature.