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Since I went to English kindergarten at age 5, I began to like the language ‘English’. It was interesting being able to understand what foreigner is asking and to answer in English. Then when I was middle school student I wanted to have an officially approved English score, so I started preparing for TOEIC. To improve the score effectively in short period, I went to academy which has teacher who lived in states for many years. Even though she has graduated schools in states, she was running the academy with Korean style which focuses on reading and writing more than speaking and listening.

Teacher let me memorize 100 words every second day without explaining the reason I have to do it. She randomly picked 80-90 words and made a test paper with those words. After taking test, I had to resit with the words I got wrong and if I don’t get enough score with the second one I was not allowed to go home unless I memorize all the 100 words. At first, because she didn’t tell me why I have to work on words, I was not motivated well. The only reason I studied was to go home, so sometimes I made cheating paper and just copied them on words. For RC, I focused on memorizing words and few grammar skills. I already had some grammar knowledge which I got from school so all the things I had to do was to arrange the ideas in proper way. For LC, I just kept taking mock test. By repeating listening to English, I could catch the point of English saying.

After studying English like this for about two months, I had score over 800 at TOEIC. Then I realized why vocabulary is important. If I know the word, even when I face a sentence which is difficult to understand, it is possible to guess the flow by matching the words. The LC is same with this. Even I was getting nervous at the exam, when I heard a similar phrase or sound with what I heard at the mock test, I was encouraged and had confidence.

As a result, the teacher’s methodology was right. It was effective to improve my English level in short period, but I think it worked because it was English for TOEIC rather than English for real life. For me, while my official English score has up-graded and being able to do better on reading after studying in this way, my level of speaking and writing was still the same. In reality, balanced English is important. When I become a teacher, I will focus on helping students to improve their English with balance. More, giving students activities or homework, I will let them know why I give it to them and how it will work on their English so that they can be more motivated and feel like ‘studying English’ not only ‘doing assignment’. To make students do what I did; just copying words from cheating paper, etc. is wasting time. I want to be a type of teacher who helps to have balanced English and makes students understand process of English.