Nate Sul-Ki Lee

November 4, 2015

**My Best Teacher**

My best teacher was my first ESL teacher when I was ten years old. My teacher was an American. I do not quite remember her name since it was so long ago. It is almost twenty years ago when I first went to her class. She taught me English as my second language from the very basics after learning the alphabet. This class was much success in my case because her class made me confident in participating while learning, I was able to take small steps towards the goal, and because there was no anxiety in learning the new language.

My ESL teacher was an enabler because she allowed an atmosphere where the students of fairly similar level learn together by interacting with each other. For instance, she would let us share a drawing book with not much words in them, and we would try to understand from trying to share ideas from the same material that we shared. The teacher would first read from the book as she points out at a certain picture while verbally saying what it is. Later, we would understand what it is and explain to each other using simple vocabulary.

My ESL teacher used very modern teaching techniques. She usually used TPR and CLT and sometimes DM, but mostly TPR and CLT. She usually used TPR when she is introducing something new and when we ask a question that can be answered with TPR. She never really took full control over her students, but she would first explain, give a task and then let the students learn from each other by interaction. Since most of the students were true beginners to English and relatively very young, GTM would not have been effective in her class, and she never used it.

Considering how I learned so much, I think my ESL teacher understood the student levels and the natural order hypothesis. Her class was managed with students from all around the globe, but they were all true beginners who just finished learning the alphabet. She would first let us listen to some very simple sentences such as “This is an apple tree”, and we would be able to pick up words we know like “apple”. Later we would say the word “apple” by pointing to the picture we see of an apple, and she would give us feedback. Then we would learn to spell the word “apple”, and therefore, my ESL teacher understood the natural order hypothesis as well.

My ESL teacher was my best teacher because she was an enabler, because she used modern teaching techniques and because she understood student levels and the natural order hypothesis. I would very much like to teach as my teacher did because not only her methods were effective, but because it was less stressful and created comfortable atmosphere where I was able to relax and acquire the language and not strain it. I think that it is a good way of teaching true beginners to intermediate students. However, I would use some different methods or give more complicated tasks for advanced learners because they definitely require more challenge than the ones I had. Other than that, I would most definitely use my ESL teacher’s methods in my class.