Jimi Kang

14 November, 2015

**My Best Teacher**

My best teacher, during my school years, was from FSL class in high school. Unfortunately I forgot his name now, but I clearly recall how I could overcome the language challenge, thanks to him. When I first went to Montreal, Canada, I enrolled into a French high school. It had passed the half of semester already and other classmates knew French-more or less. I was a true beginner in French and I lost confidence and was full of anxiety. I was too scared and frustrated, so I ended up crying during the class on the first day. The teacher seemed surprised but comforted me, then continued the lesson. After the class, he tried to empathize with my problems, understand my intelligence types by asking different questions and capture my level of both French and English knowledge. He was one of the most effective teachers that I remember so far.

First, the teacher was an excellent enabler. He always tried to pull out answers from the students rather than speaking of them himself. Also, He asked us to write him a letter once a week. No one was obliged to do it, but everyone enjoyed it. He corrected grammar and vocabulary errors and the best part was that he never forgot to add his reply at the bottom of the page. Since he always led his class in a productive way, we were always busy with making scripts for role plays, doing games, and preparing presentations. I had pressure in doing all these active assignments as I wasn’t confident in the language. My affective filter was so high I always felt sick to go to school in the morning. However, it did not last long, as he gave me enough comprehensible inputs and had been an excellent guide for me to catch up the level. He tried to have small talks with me during the breaks, shared his teaching materials like picture dictionaries, and always partnered me with peers who spoke English until I became motivated and confident.

Second, he understood the intelligence types of his students and used them adequately. When we did a group exercise or games, he always selected a captain of each group first, and let them choose their teammates. If we were in the field trip, they are mostly kinesthetic types. So, he had them led the team in the activities. I also was selected as a captain a couple of time for the activities like work involved with painting, writings, and grammars. He knew that I had intrapersonal and visual intelligences. In this way, we were very comfortable in doing the activities as we only had to cooperate with each other under the captain’s lead. Since all of us were FSL students, he sometimes challenged us with difficult assignments like doing presentation on certain topics, but he managed his class very well that no one would fall behind. One of the interesting assignments was that we had to invite some classmates over our houses, and then shared what we found out about the cultural differences.

Lastly, my classmates and I always loved the way he taught us. His managed his class in a very creative way, so we never got bored. We debated on certain topics, did role plays, and played various games. He was respectful and approachable that he was polite and always smiling and never gave negative feedback. He regularly had consultation with each of us privately, so he could understand the concerns or interests we had gained in our school life. Sometimes, he only gave lectures, especially before the exams, but he used variety source of teaching materials, audio, TV, and like interview games that we find different jobs in the schools and gave presentation in the class. We were not stayed only in the class, but he tried for us to have experiential learning by giving us many chances to practice French in real world.

Within a short period of time, my French improved in a great deal and I was selected as a student of year in FSL class. I studied really hard to go to the regular class in the next year, I was lucky to meet this great teacher in my life. I not only learned a new language from him, but also effective learning and acquisition method of new language. I moved to Toronto after two years in Montreal, I was put into the same situation as 2 years before that I had start over in an English environment. However, I was not shy or felt intimidated because I had confidence that I could overcome. I had learned to use integrated skills properly in learning a new language in his class which was never receptive and always interactive between students and with the teacher as well.