My Role Model

Wednesday 13 January, 2016

Rosa JinYoung Kim

"The goal of education is the advancement of knowledge and the dissemination of truth."

- John F. Kennedy

 For eighteen years I have been a student and I have met numerous teachers and instructors. I cannot even remember some of them and how they were. However, two teachers from my high school lingered in my mind because one, Mr. Moon, was the best and the other, Ms. Park, was the worst. Mr. Moon is a philosophy teacher and Ms. Park is an English teacher. The biggest difference between them was not the subject they teach. They were mainly different in three categories: teaching style, learner modes, and comprehensible input.

 To begin with, the teaching style of Mr. Moon is involver, while Ms. Park's style is explainer. Mr. Moon first explains the materials and puts students into groups. Students explain again what was taught during the class to peers in the group. He makes students to participate in the class, activating students' scaffolding. Students felt like there was a moment for them in the class. It was very good not only not listen to his lecture, but also to know whether I clearly understood the lecture or not. On the other hand, Ms. Park, the explainer, reads a text in a book and interprets it word by word. Then she explains a few grammar points. Students hardly get any chance to be involved in the class. If I had not liked English, I would have given up English because of her not-meaningful class.

 Next, Mr. Moon respects the learner modes, while Ms. Park does not. Every student has own learner mode. Everyone has more sensitive sensory system and that makes a student auditory, visual, or kinesthetic. For that reason, Mr. Moon presents us his class in various ways. He verbally explains the materials for auditory learners. For visual learners, he writes important parts on the board or draw maps. For kinesthetic learners, he asks us to change the seats and also to write their own notes. On the contrary, Ms. Park does not care about learner modes. Mostly she just explains and interprets the text. She writes some of vocabularies on the board but that is just one of her meaningless habits. It doesn't matter whether students copy down or read out the words. That was another factor that makes her class boring.

 Lastly, but never less importantly, Mr. Moon offers great comprehensible input while Ms. Park fails. According to Krashen's input hypothesis, comprehensible input is the only causative variable to SLA. Comprehensible input is an input that is one level higher than the student's current level. Mr. Moon was not teaching a language, but still he knows what students already know and what they can learn as next level. He may or may not follow the order of textbook because he arranges his class according to the level of materials. For students, every class was a bit challenging but still understandable, and at the end of the class, we all go some new information. However, Ms. Park follows the order of the textbook no matter what. There is no research of students' current level. Sometimes her grammar lesson is too difficult because it is not related to what we have learned before. She does not know 'I,' which is learners' present level, nor '+1,' the material one step above.

 In conclusion, from the moment I decided to become a teacher, when I make a plan for my class, I think of those two teachers. Mr. Moon's class was practical, effective, and attractive since he involved students into his class, respected students' learner modes, and offered appropriate comprehensible input. Ms. Park's class was boring, ineffective, and meaningless because she was explainer, didn't aware of learner modes, nor of comprehensible input. It is very obvious who is my role model and mentor of my teaching life that just began.