My Life as A TESOL Certified English Communication Facilitator

K131N WE Final Essay Jacki

It has been quite a journey since the first day that I attended the Kangnam TESOL center class. “Overwhelmed” was the only word can describe my feeling of the first time in the class. There were 14 people who have dream of being an English teacher. Everyone had different age and background but all had common passion about English. But somehow I felt really nervous. Thick text books and very intensive course curriculum didn’t help my nervousness and worries. It seemed impossible task for me and felt like I am hitting the thick wall with my bare hand.

However, this is already my 6th week of TESOL class! What did I learn from the class? Wow, It’s been a real eye opening experience for me. It makes me rethinking about Idea of learning itself, English learning, teacher & student relationship and teaching ….

I am so glad that I got this opportunity. I learned that learning experience can be acquired through so many ways. Not only teacher-student teaching class but also student-student interacting. Somehow teaching and learning are inseparable and they are never one-way process.

Learning about communicative teaching style was priceless. I used to learn in the class, just listen teacher’s instruction and taking a notes. Maybe little bit asking questions then take an exam. So whole class about interacting with not only teacher but students is very refreshing and interesting. In this case, teacher also can learn from students and students can learn from their classmates. It is double win-win situation! This also helps their social skills too. Best part is never get bored!!

I also realized how important to have strong structured lesson plan as a teacher. This part I never thought about before. I knew lesson topic is very important. But well-structured lesson plan makes every aspect of learning process accomplish their purpose well. Writing my own lesson plan also seemed very hard at first. But when I think that it is like putting out there a whole show or movie. Nobody want a boring show nor hard to understand show. When I introduce interesting and valuable lesson to my students, they are not only beneficiary. I am also beneficiary too.

Learning about effective lead-in activity was amazing. This process really can make student want to know something in very effective way. Eliciting student’s curiosity and desire to learn something new is key point of teaching in general. From this, in our class teacher and students communicate with English. It is very natural and effective way to learn English.

I leaned each activity in lesson plan has own purpose and goal. I have to treat all activities with same value. Great Lead-in, pre and post activity plan will boost main activity’s achievement. Actually when I plan to make the lesson, I put a lots of thoughts into lead-in part. I even look back on my learning experiences, which one was really memorable or which one didn’t work out that much. My lesson can be a mirror of my life learning experience.

Another great realization from TESOL class is knowing that how precious my life experience is. Living in America so long, I had good time and bad time. I’ve been so lucky to have many good friends but I always missed my family. I’m in my 40’s now and trying to start new chapter of my life in here. Still I am in the middle of adjusting myself in life style in Korea. A lot of things I need to figure out. Beginning of class, I got so frustrated with myself and my ability. All those years living in America felt like a mirage. But thanks for my teacher Frank’s great encouragement and warm support from my classmates, I got better by each week. Somehow It feels like miracle to me! Instead of thinking about what I am not capable of, I tried to focus on how can I approach this? What is my strong point? Surprisingly my strong point and great assets are my life experience in America. Worked as a chef and experienced culture in America are not only my fun memories. I realized I can use this for my students when I teach English.

From all those activities and assignments which I participated, I actually felt that I am experiencing something brand new. With this new way of teaching skill, I would love to meet my students. I need to exercise making a great lesson plan to teach. Always look for approachable, updated topic subjects. But most of all, I need to remind me all the time that I am a facilitator of my students’ class. Let them express their thoughts without any hesitation, let them respect each other’s ideas. As I learned from TESOL class, I will try to inspire my students’ ideas with effective eliciting. For that I need lots of preparations, researches and study.

Just imagine my class. Bunch of students talk freely and having fun. Some of them have a questions for me and some of them bring up new ideas. I would like to introduce history and art history topic so they can have more knowledge in culture. Using movie story or pop song is always fun. As part of my curriculum, I definitely will do cooking class. Not only cooking together, but whole class can work on creating recipes and menus. Maybe I can take them field trip to international food markets in Itaewon! It makes me smile just thinking about that.

There is one more thing, the most important thing that I learned from TESOL class. Believing in my students and in their ability and believing in myself as a teacher. Just like my teacher Frank kept his faith in me, I will do same to my students. I will encourage my student with these sayings “the sky has no limit” and “Life is precious every minute and more precious with you in it”. We do not learn English for a test or exam, we learn English for a better and deeper understanding of the world, ourselves and our lives.