**[146기/WD]이강호(Timo) - Essay ; Second Language Acquisition Assignment**

I was grown as a typical Korean country boy who normally uses only one language- Hangul(Korean Word) as a mother language. I never heard or learned any foreign language until I entered the middle school(7th grade). I was not familiar with the English at all at that time. My family had neither TV nor Computer at that time. I never got any chances to learn or even hear any English word. In the middle school, I started to learn English starting from alphabet, although it was quite a limited time; only few hours in a week. The English was so strange to me. Nowadays Korean students have some various opportunities to hear or learn about English. However, when I was in school in 1970’s, there were not so good ways or chances to learn English especially to country boy like me. The only way I could learn English was to learn from English teachers in the school. However, the method English teachers at that time applied were mostly traditional way; they rarely used the target language. Students were ordered to read texts and translate them and check grammatical errors. I still remember my first English teacher. She was somehow small in size but very strict to us. She much depended on memorization the text book. She forced us to memorize the texts and recite in the class. If anyone fails, she gave them punishments. The punishments were so severe. Learning English was horrible at that time. As for me, learning English was not fun but heavy task I had to pass.

Since then till throughout the secondary school, the English learning environment were not changed much. The English teachers were mostly depended on the GTM(Grammar-Translation Method) although as time goes, sometimes they tried to apply ALM(Audio-Lingual Method) using cassette tapes and CD’s. As far as I remembered, teachers hardly tried to apply TPR(Total Physical Response) method. I think although the TPR is useful with beginner and lower-level students, they might think we are not so young in age or reading and translating the text book was enough. None of the teachers applied CLT(Communicative Language Teaching) or CLL(Community Language Learning ) or TBL(Task-based Learning) because all these method were related to student-centered approaches and these were not allowed in the class in my school days. As a result, these methods of teaching and learning English in school could not help me to master English. After learning English so many years, I still had no confidence of English. At that time, the purpose of learning English was focused on passing paper exams, especially university admission exams. Apart from it, I hardly got the chances to use it. Because the English was not a tool to communicate with the other people or a way of living to me at that time, I could not improve my English level.

However, when I started to live in a foreign land after I became adult, the English became very important to me. It became my major tool to communicate with the people and a way of living in it. The necessity of studying English boosts the motivation to learn it. So, my English learning can be found in the most of 8 characteristics of adult learners which was suggested by Malcolm Shepherd Knowles(1913-1997). I was self-directed, practical and results-oriented, use personal experience as a resource, much motivated with high expectations etc. As Malcolm mentioned, although I had zeal and desire to learn, I still less open-minded and slow to learn because the ageing does affect learning and maturity and profound life experiences usually lead to resistance to change.

I am still learning English looking for the best way to improve my level. At the same time, I would like to contribute to teach the English in better way. Base on my language learning experiences, teachers especially those who teach adult learners firstly need to understand about the characteristics of the learners and combined the various ways of teaching method until they find the best way to the learners. Teacher need to be a good motivator, helper, instructional designer and student-centered with flexible and open-minded. If the student who has great zeal and right learning attitude meet good teacher whom I’ve mentioned above would help a lot to improve his/her English. I hope I can be such kind of a teacher through the TESOL training program. ^^