**My Life as a TESOL Certified English Communication Facilitator**

KNT145 Final Essay (Sunny) Seon Kyo Hong

Teachers are everywhere; even in uncivilized places of the world, there exist people who teach how to survive in the climate and the environment where they live and teach to preserve and pass their tradition and custom down to their descendants. To me, teachers are not just those who earn money through teaching at a school or some educational organizations. Teachers are those who provide knowledge and information that students need in order to be in control or well-fitted to their society so that they can live on their own as they grow up and become independent.

Even though there are innumerable teachers in the world who are experts in their teaching subjects, not all of them are striving to give their everything to their students. I learned a lot from the California State University at Long Beach Times Media Kangnam TESOL Center Class Number 145 and was able to come up with my own definition of a good teacher.

According to what I have learned in the past 8 weeks, a good teacher, especially an English teacher for EFL students, should take a role of a facilitator instead of a charismatic boss or a commander. In other words, a good teacher is like a supporting role in a movie who not only makes the protagonist more attractive and notable, but also helps the audience enjoy watching the movie. Personally, I like to get attention from the students or a large group of people and to be in control of my lesson when I teach. Since I have taught numerous students English, math, and science since I graduated from college, I was somewhat confident, or rather a little arrogant, when I evaluated myself as a teacher. I loved to be a protagonist, and most of the time I made my students supporting roles. After I took the first class of the TESOL program, I learned that I made so many mistakes to my students in the past. According to the lesson, English is best learned for EFL students when they are provided an environment and method through which they can learn English in the same way they learned their first language. Cramming and forcing method of teaching I had would adversely affect the students, make them to hate English, and could even result in a low self-esteem and lack of confidence. Every class, I could not stop thinking about my former students and I felt sorry to them for not being their best teacher. I am glad that I took this program so that I will not make the same mistakes again.

Some of my takeaways from each class are that teachers must know why the students are doing the activity that they are told to; that students are autonomous learners; that language learning is all about communication; and that teacher’s role is a provider and facilitator, rather than a controller. I am good at presenting my work in front of many people and am also proficient at making people focus on me. However, it was always very difficult to plan in advance what I will teach when I did the micro-teachings. Students have right to know why the activities are meaningful and helpful in learning English, but if the teacher is not able to answer the students, they will drop the interest and motivation in learning as well as credibility of the teacher. Teachers are not the main role in where learning happens. If students are well motivated and provided with adequate and comfortable environment, they can learn on their own without someone forcibly imprinting information on their minds.

Thirdly, it is very effective for EFL students to learn English as they learned their first language. Many people learn their first language through communication instead of drilling grammar or memorizing vocabularies. Language learning for a young kid first takes place in their familiar environment and with people close to them. Likewise, English is learned best when students could communicate without stress and humiliation from the teacher and the test scores.

Lastly, teacher’s role is important. Teacher should not evaluate or criticize students based on tests or memorization. Teacher should provide activities where students are encouraged and motivated to let them speak out without fear of making mistakes. Teacher facilitates students speaking English stress-free.

I also gained how to work with my fellow teachers through many team activities and discussions. Outside the class we also shared ideas and encouraged each other, truly blessing one another to achieve their aim as an English teacher. By actually doing the ice-break activities that each teacher prepares, I could gain some ideas to apply for my future class. Listening to their stories to elicit students by using the wall charts was also interesting and helpful to me to grab an idea of great lead-in for class.

For vocabulary learning, I thought it was very interesting to let students first guess the words, then imply the meaning through reading how the words were used in the text. Rather than giving definitions of each new vocabulary right away, helping students to guess the synonyms and adequate meaning by reading the text are more effective and interesting way for the students. I thought in this way the vocabulary would last longer in their memory.

It was the most difficult to be able to teach grammar. Making a substitution table, explaining the function and the syntax were a lot harder than I expected. Also, to help students fully understand the syntax, teachers had to repetitively say the example sentences, tabbing the whiteboard on every syllable of the word. The whole process was complicated at first, but due to the seemingly easy and simple activity, students may find grammar easy and gain confidence.

After I become a TESOL certified teacher, I would like to start working as an English teacher right away. I want to become famous in the field of English education, giving hope and encouragement to every student I meet from now on. As my role model, Anne Sullivan, I want to bring up many students to achieve their dreams and give good influences in many places of the world and to do so, they must be able to speak English. I will be a great English teacher for my students.