**The ways of teaching my English teachers did**

148th WD--- Eunice

I am happy to think about my teachers who helped me learn many things. Their ways of teaching were usually effective but sometimes might not be, but with their help I have grown and changed myself. Even their ineffective ways of teaching help encourage me to avoid discouraging students and teach them effectively

I have studied English since 1976 (from my middle school days). At that time English was taught in translation-oriented way. English teachers explained what the vocabularies meant first and then read the sentences and translated them into Korean. Some teachers did not even use the tape recorder with which students could listen to the pronunciation of the native speakers.

Now I understand that they had no other choice but to teach translation-oriented English because they were taught English in that way. Unlike the teachers of other subjects who could know their subject matters well and prepare interesting activities for students, English teachers might have difficulty in being well-prepared to teach three language skills—listening, speaking, and writing—except reading.

While translating the sentences into Korean, teachers explained some important grammar rules for students to understand the sentence structure. Unfortunately most English teachers of our school explained to the students only the grammar rules and told them to memorize the rules and went back to translating sentences. It was so boring that most students began to drowse five minutes after the explanation started. Without any pleasure of learning a foreign language we should focus on rote memorization of the grammar rules to answer the test questions and prepare for the university entrance exam.

However, in that situation an English teacher was so different that I can remember her until now. She kindly explained the grammar rules to the students and gave them time to understand the rules. She made us teach each other the rules in pairs. We gradually could understand the rules while giving and taking help with each other in pairs and enjoy the learning process itself. And what we explained to each other was better retained than rote memorization of rules.

I am deeply thankful to the English teacher for helping me understand the grammar rules and feel the pleasure of learning even in the times when English was taught in traditional ways. I realize that even if the situation is not good, good teachers try to do their best in facilitating students’ learning.

These days I am happy to have the chance to learn English and think about teaching students English again in the Times Media Tesol Program. According to Noam Chomsky, adult learners cannot acquire a second language even if they have the Language Acquisition Device because they passed the Critical Age that language acquisition can occur within. However, (with 13 fellow trainees) I am going through the experience that adult learners can acquire a (foreign) language if they use the language in meaningful interactions. Our English teacher fosters opportunities for 14 goal-oriented learners to have meaningful interactions in the classroom. I hope that all of the learners could attain the goals of their own by the end of the course.