TESOL 157th

Essay Assignment

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 I’d like to write about some of language learning experiences I had. I used to be very passionate about English and enjoy learning English with native-speaking instructors. I enjoyed listening to what they say, so I tried a lot to have a variety of conversations with them. When I was an elementary school student, I went to academic institution, which was popular with educated native speakers at that time, and I also took English program with native-speaking instructors during my college life. I really liked to learn from native speakers, so both educations were very joyful and meaningful to me.

 I’m not really a person kind of bodily, kinesthetic type, or active experiencing type, but for the case of language learning, I strongly agree with the opinion that having direct conversation and experience of foreign cultures should be considered as worthwhile and useful education.

 I haven’t even realized this before, but nowadays I think I enjoyed learning English with native speakers because of its bigger efficiency than just simple cramming method of teaching. By learning with practical and direct experiences, it became easier for me to remember. These experiences also helped me out to fully enjoy studying abroad and living with host families. It’s not easy to have all kind of learning experiences, but if there is any opportunity of studying abroad or another way to learn language, we should leap at a chance.

If I had finished learning just by reading without any practices, I’m pretty sure I couldn’t be able to talk with foreigners. I definitely recommend studying abroad as an effective way of learning language.

With a slight reference to our class materials, I think all of things I wrote above are related to teaching styles, because most of my native-speaking instructors were in type of ‘involvers’ or ‘enablers’. I had a lot of ‘explainer’ type of teachers at my high school, and I don’t remember many things I learned from them. For example, here are 2 types of Chinese letter education that I took. With the first case, I almost forgot and need to study all over again because what I’ve learned at that time was all just for exams, so my memory had lasted only for the test time. For the other case, I still remember quite a few Chinese words even though I learned them when I was very little girl, and I think this is because I had chance to speak out those words and use them in dialogues or conversations.

Of course, ‘explaining’ has to be on the basis when we teach languages or other things, but what I think as the effective way of studying language is to have practical experiences. No matter how many languages we have learned, it’s impossible to remember all of them unless we practice for ourselves. It can be difficult to check each of students and their learning conditions, but teachers should at least give students a chance to understand and discuss what they learned in class.

Students have a broad range of preferences when they learn something, so it’s important to use various materials such as video clips or PPT and have some activities in class. Stick to one type of teaching style can be very ineffective for some students, so it’s good to be open-minded and have flexibility during the class. Besides, a break should be necessarily provided to students because they can’t pay attention for a long time without any breaks. Students can refresh their concentration by eating snacks or taking a little nap during a break.

Most students prefer teachers who are reliable and punctual. I think being on time, which is a basic common sense, gives trust to students, so it could be helpful in making good rapport with them. An ‘effective way of teaching’ is very relative to make a definition, but through my learning experiences, I could recognize that it can be defined by how teachers interact with their students.