161th WD Sophia (JIHYE LEE)

I am so upset whenever I think about my second language experiences back in my school days. I wanted to do well in English so I studied English very hard. However I think the result is worst regardless of my English marks on the test. My English teachers did not teach how to speak, listen and write while they put a lot of emphasis on reading, comprehension and grammar. I only learned to find answers quickly and accurately in a given time for scores to get in good universities. I was in same situation when I was in university. I studied English only for high TOEIC score to get a good job. Therefore I cannot tell that I learned English properly let alone acquisition as a second language from these experiences. The worst experience about learning English was when I was 1st grade in middle school. My English teacher did not speak English well but one of my classmates spoke English fluently because she has studied in English-speaking countries for many years. So she has frequently pointed out my teacher’s pronunciation. It caused him considerable discomfort because it is considered disrespectful behavior. As a result my classmate was spoken of as a rude student from teachers. This case drove students including me a deep silence in the class. He probably thought that the teacher’s authority was more important rather than recognizing [characteristics](http://endic.naver.com/enkrEntry.nhn?entryId=3b5c0e4ab3d544378eda4470cceaa5d2&query=characteristics) of each student and encouraging. I can get many key points about qualities of an effective teacher and teacher’s types from this experience. An effective teacher shows respect, gives clear and positive feedback, be patient, knows the subject matter well, etc. But my English teacher did not show respect to students. If he accepted her point out and communicated with students for having better pronunciation, the English class was much better helpful. As teacher’s type, he was an explainer that tends to be teacher-centered and relies on explanation or lecture. This teaching method can easily made learners like me are passive. My retention rate was remarkably low as a natural result. It was very unhelpful and ineffective teaching method as second language acquisition. Dramatically the reason that I had changed my idea about learning English was while learning in study groups. I joined study groups out of curiosity at first. Pretty soon I became interested in learning English. I have learned English with native speaker teachers and several classmates. One of my teachers was Kimberly. She was open minded and incredibly passionate in teaching. She grouped learners into classes by assessing students’ level and each student’s individuality. She usually asked us about our recent daily lives before a class to observe students mood and icebreaking. She tried to lead all students participate activity in the class through various teaching methods. For example, we practiced shadowing tasks, discussed in interested topics and gave presentations on matters of daily life. Therefore we could approach the Integrated-skill using language skills together. For effective discussions and presentations, classmates and I have to prepare a lot; mostly all of us shared pair works. We all motivated ourselves in these ways. After our works, she always gave us helpful feedback and encouraging words and she explained new vocabulary with easy examples that was relevant to everyday life. In addition, she tried to keep the good atmosphere in a class from getting boring with using a variety of teaching tools such as YouTube, textbooks, novels, movies, papers, flies, blackboard, etc. When we made mistakes and got embarrassed during the class, she waited with patience and used to tell us like this, “Learning a second language is a hard task and takes a long time. It is no wonder. But if you guys tries with self-confidence, you can make it. Never mind your mistakes.” I think she is enabler because she really wanted to be a guide for us. Plus she developed a rapport with us because she instilled confidence into us. I loved that. Especially she used to advice me for English education for kids because I was so interested in English education for my daughters. She put emphasis on acquisition. This point is really essential thing compared to my terrible experiences in my school days. She gave me motivation and courage to be autonomous leaner. Her class was definitely helpful to me.