TESOL Essay

Juil(Tony) Jung – 정주일

Learning second language is interesting. The improvement for second language learning depends on how a second language environment affects learners. I want to introduce my second language learning environment with learning types.

First, when I was in middle school. I learned English with Grammar -Translation Method that is used to facilitate students’ reading skills. I remembered that my teacher explained the English textbook to whole class as teacher-front. In the class, my teacher asked students to read one paragraph or sentences and to translate the English text into Korean. It was pretty difficult to me because I could not have the skill to decode English text. When I went to private academy to learn English more, I experience the intensive grammar lesson. The teacher spoke metalanguage in Korean that sounded new to me because I was not used to metalanguage the teacher used to explain grammar concept. In my middle school period, the teachers played the role as explainer that was teacher-centered. In middle school, learning English was difficult for me because it used difficult text. However, it was helpful to me because it helped me to find the way to translate English into Korean and to improve reading skills.

Second, I went to university, I found the second learning environment different from my middle school and high school. In the class, my professor, native English speaker, formed students as the groups and assigned each role for students in each group like leader, time keeper, writer, presenter, etc. It gave me the responsibility when I did group discussion with group members in the class. I think the class facilitated group working and the teacher played the role as involver that participated group work by going around groups and helped them. When the group discussion was over, my professor asked each member of groups to come to the front and to present the result of group discussion to the whole class. I got many chances to present to the whole class in this class. My participation was high in the class. Also, in group work and pair work, my professor distributed paper to students for the activity called information gap. In order to find the information I need to complete a map, I asked my partner questions. After I received the information, I could fill in them in the blank. This activity gave me the chances to talk to partner in English. It helped me to interact with other students with group work and pair work. The class didn’t use difficult long text that asked students to find the answer. It used simple sentences to ask students to communicate. I think that it was student-centered class.

Third, I took part in drama class in the drama institution. It was fun to me because the class got students to move around and act in the stage without sitting still in a chair when we practice acting. I felt like I was a kinesthetic learner because I used body to act. Although I had to memorize my line on the script, it was easy for me to memorize it because I used body and context on the text by acting. It was better than memorizing vocabulary or sentence in sitting still. Learning English as drama role play and simulation was helpful to me to learn a second language.

I experienced three types of a second language environment with Grammar-Translation Method, group work, and drama as role play. Learning English with Grammar-Translation was helpful to me to improve reading text skills although it was difficult by using difficult text. Group working helped me to speak with set situation to use many functions. Drama role play gave me the fun to utilize English lines on the script without learning burden. I introduced three types of a second language environments for learning English. Each of those types have their own characteristics to help me to learn English.