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Essay #1, 12/27 Tue

Professor Curtis

My teaching beliefs

I decided to go to university in the United States after I graduated from high school, but I thought that my English back then was not fluent enough to take classes in English. Thus, I decided to take ESL classes before going to university even though I had a TOFEL score required for college admission. The ESL program I took had after school classes that I could choose to take. I knew I was not very good at slangs or idioms, so I chose Professor Kelly’s idioms class as my after school class.

The first difference that I noticed between American classrooms and Korean classrooms is their teaching style and atmosphere. Professor Kelly's classroom is a lot more modern than Korean classrooms, which are very traditional. Even though I had classes with a native English teacher during my high school years in Korea, I recognized that all of my ESL professors, including Professor Kelly, made their classroom more interactive than the teachers in Korea. They encouraged us ask questions, gave enough time to students to discuss each other, and students actively participated in activities, group works, role plays, and etc.

Professor Kelly was a great enabler. She prepared a lot of demonstrations, pictures, and various activities to help her students understand the meaning of expressions, memorize them, and use them in our daily life. First, she didn't try to explain the definition or meaning of expressions. Instead, she showed some pictures describing a situation that the expression is used and handed out a dialogue that is related with the picture including the expression that she wanted to teach. Therefore, students could guess the meaning of the expression from those pictures and dialogues. Then she would give students exact meaning of the expression. I think that helped students a lot to remember the meaning of the expression and how it is used in certain situations or conversations.

Also, She used various methods including audio-lingual method, total physical response, and communicative method. She would read out loud and let students repeat her pronunciations, she had a lot of activities using our bodies, and she really tried to interact with students. She also used several types of seating so that students could actively involved in her class. Sometimes, we put all chairs and desks along the walls to make some rooms so that everyone could stand and do exercises or activities. In addition, she always let her students make sentences or conversations using the idioms that we learned. I think it let her check if students really understood the meaning and know how to use it properly. Also we did many role plays with our own scripts containing multiple idioms as we kept learning more and more throughout the course so that not only we learn how to use new expressions but also we won't forget those expressions learned in the past.

While I was taking her class, filled with a lot of talking and full of activities, I found myself enjoying her class so much even though I’m a little quiet and shy person to talk a lot and to participate in active exercises. I really liked her class, and her class surely helped me a lot to learn. As I experienced a second language environment in the United States, I realized how important a teacher's role is in students' learning. An enabler teacher can make students be more active and modern teaching can make them participate actively during the class. I think it can be little difficult for me to become an enabler rather than an explainer because I'm used to being passive since I experienced traditional teaching more than modern teaching. However, as I am taking TESOL classes and learning various teaching methods, teacher types, effective teaching, and etc., I hope that I can take full advantages from it to become a good teacher. I would like to become an excellent enabler who encourages students actively participate in classes, makes a lot of interactions with them by using various teaching methods, makes classes enjoyable and educative at the same time, and who has empathy, authenticity, and respects.