**TESOL Essay #1: Second Language Acquisition Assignment**

**73rd weekend**

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**“A picture is worth a thousand words.”**

Why are Korean students generally struck speechless when speaking English notwithstanding decades of study in school? Why wasn’t it until they went abroad for language studies only for several months that they could find their tongue?

I was no exception!

For almost a decade from middle school until university, I used to study English through traditional teaching which was very teacher-centered with ‘chalk and talk’ using the board to explain things. The only material of teaching was text-book. Most English teachers were explainers and by far the most active person in my traditional classroom.

One of my English teachers in middle school, he instructed students to open their textbook as soon as he entered into the classroom, and then started reading and translating a textbook by himself. He never gave us attention until the class was over even though most classmates made a noise or slept at the desk. He never questioned to students even with CCQs (concept, check, questions) or ICQs (instruction, check, questions). He didn’t seem to be in empathy which Carl Rogers thinks the most important thing for teachers with students. Accordingly, it was not only me who didn’t respect him in spite of the authenticity of textbook lessons.

In case of another teacher in high school, she let students read and translate a textbook and take paper exams for grammar and vocabulary every day. We had to get positive rewards and positive punishment, providing compliment and discipline respectively. She seemed goal-oriented that is an exam at least.

At that time, my role was primarily to listen and take notes to get high scores in English exams. I can’t help admitting to being good at grammar and vocabulary thanks to this kind of learning by rote but I had no confidence at speaking out English.

It became a big problem whenever I try to get a job after graduation from university because I was speechless in front of interviewers during the interview in English in spite of high TOEIC scores.

I decided to go to New Zealand to study English again.

I met Gail who was an involver and enabler in teaching English there. She knew that most Asian students are vulnerable to speaking so focused on opening our lips. Her most impressive teaching method was visual material usage and activities. She let students close the books and have conversation each other in pairs or groups after showing pictures or videos. She also tried to let us out of the classroom and enjoy speaking up with native speakers as much as possible. It was explicitly student-centered in the modern classroom and her visual material was worth a thousand text books.

My English speaking skill was eventually improved only after several months and I could get a job at a foreign company after coming back to Korea.

I believe that my grammar and vocabulary served as a foundation for my speaking skill in spite of a short space of time in New Zealand. A well-balanced education being distributed at 70% of STT (students, talk, time) and 30% of TTT (teacher, talk, time) is effective to learn second language like English.

Of course, I think the first obligation of teachers is to know the subject matter well with enthusiasm and respect, and understand how much adult learners have life experiences and knowledge. As a teacher, I will have my students share their experiences and knowledge with each other as much as possible because I know it is more effective than just memorizing text books to be good at speaking up English.

“A picture is worth a thousand words.”

I would like students to remember me of an effective teacher in the future.

Finally, I also want to be a teacher who can give students a motivation to learn English to attain their goals.

“One fact well understood by observation, and well guided development, is worth a thousand times more than a thousand words”

*- The American Journal of Education, 1858.*