It will have been 20 years next year since I started learning English. There are lots of reasons for people studying English and my reason was to achieve good grade in high school to enter great university. I have received various kinds of English education including school education.

I began to learn English at my age six because my mom was very passionate about teaching me and my brother English. She always emphasized the importance of English. She brought us to one famous English Academy in Incheon and our first English teacher was Mark, native speaker from USA. There were no friends about the same age as me and my brother but I loved Mark’s class. My memory of him is very vivid. I still remember singing BINGO song, doing puzzles and reading English picture books with him. I was too young to feel E.A.R of Mark but it was best English class in my life.

In my opinion, Mark was ‘involver’ so many young people didn’t feel bored in his class. He always used various activities to make students active and involved. He has already known how to teach the young. It was really positive experience and maybe it was since I met Mark that I have started to love English.

After entering elementary school, I couldn’t go to the Academy any more. There are many good English teachers in school but they were all ‘explainers’. The English classes in elementary school and middle school ware boring and my interests in English have started to decrease. Of course I was much less patient when I was in my school years than now. I know teachers who are explainer are also great, have lots of knowledge and show me E.A.R but I don’t think they have good teaching skills and I have not liked the teaching style of explainer. I hated to hear teachers read text books, to take notes for more than 30 minutes and just sit down at my desk and look at the black board.

School teacher’s teaching techniques, lecture and reading, resulted in 5~10% retention rates for me because not only I didn’t know the purpose for learning English and didn’t have interests but also just reading couldn’t make students’ memory improved. It was natural for students not to concentrate on boring and incomprehensible class.

When I was freshman in high school, I got my interests in English back. I had a chance to visit Canada to study English and learn foreign culture for a month. In Canada, I went to school in the morning with lunch box that my homestay aunt made and attended ESL classes with native speaker. In the afternoon I visited famous places with Canadian friends who volunteered to guide Korean students. In the evening I came back home and had dinner with homestay family talking about issue of Korea and Canada. All members of my homestay family were so nice that I can’t forget them forever.

This Canada experience was really successful for learning English. I could feel my ability to speak and listen to English improved by myself. Both Canadian ESL teacher and my homestay family were ‘enabler’ and I was fully touched by them because of their E.S.R. And they always had me solve the problems or find the answers first and discuss with me next. ESL teacher gave me lots of homework and I was satisficed with this because I could have enough time to think about problems and it’s helpful to improve my English ability. Also my retention rate seemed to reach about 80%.

After back to Korea, I set up my goal to be a teacher of English. I really want to be not a just English teacher, but a great English teacher who knows subject, methodology, what the students want to learn and has people skills. We usually call this type of teacher ‘enabler’ and think enabler helps lots of students to learn English pleasantly, which is my ultimate purpose. Also I learned that knowledge and skills are not the most important thing for teachers. Teachers who showed E.S.R made their students touched. To be an effective teacher, I should have empathy for students, give authenticity to students and respect all students. I believe I can be who I want to be like Mark and ESL teacher I met in my school days.