**Great teachers can even change our life.**

**83rd WK Chloe**

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” - Nelson Mandela

I have learned English for 10 years during my school days. I went to a Language academy in Stony Brook University New York when I was a university student. While learning English for over 15 years, I have both successful and not so successful experiences in ESL. Nelson Mandela’s quote is very interesting to me. What is supposed to be a goal of a teacher? How can I teach my students? These are related to my own ESL teaching beliefs. So I will compare the success and failure of language learning experience in this paper.

**1. Teacher’s style**

First of all, characteristic of teacher is an important factor of ESL. Teaching styles are divided into three categories; there are explainer and involver and enabler. I usually met the explainer style teacher in South Korea. When I entered in Song-Pa middle school, I began to study English as a subject for the exam. Actually, I didn’t have any interesting feelings about English. Mr. Shin always focused on receptive skills, He didn’t really try to check how much students understood. He was totally an Explainer. His lecture was over 90% TTT and teacher-centered class made the student bored. There was no rapport between him and students. We just memorize English. In this way, I got a good grade on the College Scholastic Ability Test. Not only I but also many other Koreans were faced with that situation. Our listening and reading skills are good, but speaking and writing skills are terrible.

When I took an intensive language course at Stony Brook University in 2010, Mrs. Helen was perfect teacher for me. She was not only explainer but also enabler. She gives more information using a variety of ways. She never missed any student skipping the chance to speak. Helen was enthusiastic and gave positive feedback although I do something wrong. So I was not worried about mistake. It seems like just playtime. I was glad to go to class and my English skill was getting better.

**2. Traditional vs. Modern teaching**

When I was a student, I experienced a lot of English teachers who were accustomed to traditional teaching. It is well known traditional classroom was fixed seating. They were always used in rows and direction with a board. It was hard to change seating arrangements. Throughout high school years, most students were passive because there were no group activities. During class, we have to read a book and teacher only explained how to solve the problem. There are some shortcomings like students get little opportunity to speaking; they often have trouble focusing in class. However, modern days, I can see a number of other arrangements are possible. In Stony Brook, there were eight students from China, Brazil, Turkey, and France. There were small students unlike traditional class. We are not good at being together with totally different culture. International classes were so fun. When Helen taught, she used multi-media materials. She also liked group activities such as pair work, role play etc. We always had a wonderful English time together.

**3. Adult learner characteristics.**

Finally, characteristics of adult learners are a critical factor of ESL. According to Malcolm, there are five characteristics of adult learners. I think that goal-oriented type is more important for ESL. When I was in high school student, most friends did not study hard. They just have to do well on the national university entrance exam. However, when I enter university, most students studied very hard for many reasons like test, promotion, job, money, etc… Thus, adults might be enthusiastic for learning.

In conclusion, it is important to be aware of many factors for language learning. Thorough my personal experience, I could apply the concepts I learned in TESOL. Education is the most powerful weapon; it is the best career in the world knowing that I touch not only my student’s lives, but their children for generations. A Teacher has more responsibilities beyond the teaching. I have to strive for my dreams in order to become a good teacher.