**Assignment #1**

**92th class, Times TESOL Media**

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When I was 15 years old, I went to USA for an exchange student. I met plenty of friends there, enjoyed school life, had parties almost every night. A year later, I came back to Korea. My listening and speaking English skills were nearly perfect by then, considering that I was educated a year. When I came back to Korea, I realized my writing and reading skills were terrible. I thought I needed the second chance to work on writing and reading. Therefore I went to Canada to finish high school, studied hard, other than partying, and there certainly was an improvement, leading all four skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, a “success”. However, I would have to say there were teachers that helped me through various language barriers I faced time to time. I am going to explore those experiences I had, and connect them with a few lessons I have learned in Times TESOL Media so far.

When I first went to the United States, I was a “pre-intermediate” student. I could get my basic needs, but only could verbalize a few words, if even a phrase. However, I experienced a dramatic improvement in my speaking and listening skills, because of my 10th grade English/ Speech teacher.

He made the classroom the perfect “modern” one. We, the classroom, read books at home. Instead of giving lectures, he let us discuss, in small groups and as the whole class. I had problem with reading many pages of book at the first time, so he gave me the story book audio tape, so I could listen while I was still following the book with my eyes. I think I was an “auditory” student, since I could finish the book much easier by doing it. When we were discussing as the class, he “respected” every each of our opinions, so no one would feel embarrassed. Seeing it, even I, who had very poor English speaking ability, became brave enough to speak out my opinion in front of the class, which made my English better every day. He also gave me a “positive feedback” every time I raised my hand, which made me confident, so I would be more actively involved in class. He also was just a “manager” to lead the discussion, so that the discussion wouldn’t leave the right path. By reading books, participating in discussion, and asking questions I didn’t understand, I could work on “lexis” and “function” of the five language systems.

When he was teaching Speech, he became the perfect “enabler”. In the Speech class, we had to give individual speeches. He thoroughly explained how to do it, so everyone would be well aware of the rules. He then gave us “live demonstration” to increase the “retention” rate. Topic range was so wide that we could choose our own topics, research, and present. By presenting in front of everyone, I could surely develop my “social skills”.

Aside from individual speech, we also had to debate. The debaters had to research before coming to class, so they would be confident of what they were saying, and could raise their voices. Before doing it, he also showed us “audio-visuals” of good debates and bad, so that we would remember them longer.

However, my writing and reading skills were still insufficient, but my 12th grade English teacher helped me progress. Because it is 12th grade course, the students had to read intensive English literature, like Shakespeare, finish worksheets about the book, and write essays. After reading and finishing worksheets, she let us discuss in groups, followed by class discussion. She was more of “involver” than “enabler”, because she led the class discussion, let us speak out whatever we thought, but still had control over us, telling us what is close to the answer and what is not. After the discussion, we had to write essays for homework. She taught us how to write long sentences without interfering the meaning, by using “guided discovery” method, followed by “lecturing” and “live demonstration”, which helped us to remember it when we were writing essays at home. She also gave them back with detailed feedback on both the “grammar” and content. For me, the feedback helped enormously, because she always supported my idea, so I would be “motivated” and confident. At the same time, she corrected my grammar error, so I would learn from mistakes.

To conclude, the two teachers had something in common: they were very enthusiastic, gave students clear and positive feedbacks, communicated clearly, connected with students to listen to them, knew their problems, respected them, and, of course, knew the subject matter very well. I am so grateful that I have met them, because, otherwise, my English ability wouldn’t have grown this much.