<Essay>

TESOL 95 WEEKDAY CLASS

Shin Seon (Joy) Jeong

TESOL 01 : Second Language Acquisition Assignment

I started leaning English at the age of fourteen when I was in the middle school and it has lasted for over thirty years so far. What a long time it is! I am going to divide the times into four parts in the following and describe in each.

1. Teens (from fourteen to nineteen)
2. Twenties
3. Thirties
4. Middle age (from the end of thirty to the present)

**Teens**

I would say that I was like a puppet in terms of learning English in the school in my teens. No having motivation to learn English, I just followed my English teacher’s instruction. It was very traditional teaching and I felt so boring. Being Chalk & Talk and Jug & Mug, the time in the class was mostly Teacher Talking Time. He spent most of the time to explain grammars and translate English into Korean. Student’s activities were reading text in the beginning of the each lesson, answering exercise in the last of the lesson and lots of homework.

**Twenties**

In my twenties, having my full time job, I continued to learn English in private institute for my better future such as listening foreign news, memorizing vocabulary, reading, writing, and grammar etc. I think it was also failure like in my teens even though I had my own motivation and studied hard because English looked an impossible territory to conquer and I seemed a slave of English. Here is a good example but sad. I turned back to my way on the street when I saw foreigners because I was afraid to speak in English which meant escaping English speaking environment.

**Thirties**

During my working in Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia with multinational workers including Australians and the English in the beginning of my thirties, I could not speak in English at all. We communicated in Russian a little. Fortunately, communication with them was not my main works. It was teaching Korean at a university. After my time in Kyrgyzstan, this experience was enough to stimulate me to make a challenge in Korea and I started learning English at institute again for two years consistently and then I would say it was a success. The reasons why I think to be a success are intrinsic motivation, modern classroom, live demonstration, Student Talking Time, mutual communication, using very practical contents in my daily happening, and having fun. Through this time, I recognized that I could have fun with English instead of being scared and English would be a culture to learn instead of a subject to study.

**Middle Age**

The end of my thirty’s, I became a member of an International Christian organization. This happening made me to take an IELTS test in Korea, an ESL class in Australia for a year, and work in the U.K for three years. During my ESL class in abroad, I experienced to take lots of activities such as playing the games, having discussions, accomplishing missions out of the class (e.g. on the street, in the shop, in the museum, in the kitchen etc), going to the picnic etc. I think the type of my ESL teachers who come from New Zealand and Australia was explainer, involver, and enabler whom I never met in Korea. The various experiences and balanced teacher’s type helped me to be familiar with English. I am still struggling with speaking in English fluently but I am not afraid of English at least I think that I have self-confidence of it.

At present, I am learning about how to teach English and a saying in Korea came to my mind, ‘Only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches.’ According to my own ESL teaching beliefs through my experiences to learn English, the most important things are motivation, mutual way between teacher and students, and having fun.