**My Two Language**

**Learning Experiences**

**Joelle Soohyun Oh**

**Chris Hopewell**

**May 16, 2014**

**TIMES TESOL WK100th**

**759 Words**

**Outline**

1. **Introduction**

Brief summary about my English studies in Belgium and my English classes in Korean university which were modern and traditional.

1. **Body**
2. Modern English classroom learning English Reading in Korea.
3. Traditional English classroom learning English Grammar in Korea.
4. **Conclusion**

There are no answers to which teaching style is better so a teacher must always understand the students’ experience and knowledge, and try to find the best teaching methods and materials that could draw out strengths of his or her students to help them reach their goals.

I have been studying English for as long as I can remember. As almost all Korean students did, I remember going to a private English institute after school when I was only twelve years old. The irony is that I do not actually remember what I learned there. What truly helped my English improve was my 5 years in an international school in Belgium between the age of thirteen and eighteen. There, English was everywhere. It was not only in my classroom but also outside of classroom. I could acquire English naturally and most effectively because I built my life knowledge and experiences in English. I was not studying English, but studying life in English. Then, I majored in English Linguistics in my University to solidify my English language skills. Today, I prepared to talk about two of my English language learning experiences from my University. One was English Reading class taught in a modern teaching style and the other was English Grammar class taught in a traditional teaching style.

 An English Reading class I took in my University was taught in a modern teaching style. The professor was an enabler who had wonderful people skills that kept the students enthusiastic and she gave the students full control of the class when we were working on our own. Professor used “Tuesdays with Morrie” to teach us reading skills. She sometimes used audio-visual such as short clips from the movie Tuesdays with Morrie which kept us interested at all times. Our assignment was to read one or two chapters each week. The class was communicative focus and student-centered because we had to come to the front to talk about our feelings and thoughts on the chapter we read. Then the professor really listened to us and gave us clear feedback which was very helpful. We also participated in activities and group works such as putting random paragraphs from the book in the right order and finding the correct vocabulary into the blank of a sentence from the book. Most of all, what I really liked about this class was that the professor knew the clear goals of students very well and provided materials that were highly related to the students’ goals which was to improve English reading skills.

 An English grammar class I took in my University was taught in a traditional teaching style. The class was lecture-based and the students did not talk at all during class because we did not need to talk. We worked individually all the time and there was no group work which made the students very passive. He sometimes wrote things on the board and never used interesting audio-visuals. The professor was an explainer. He knew the subject of grammar very well because he even had his own book written. He always relied on explaining and lecturing to give us information on grammar. Fortunately, his explanations were excellent. We took notes and solved grammar problems by ourselves to prepare for exams and quizzes. Although the class was not so energetic, we could stay focused because we were self-directed to our goals of learning grammar. I think this class could have been much better if the professor had a sense of humor and emphasized with students’ problems and feelings because for me, the subject of grammar is not so interesting and he did not make that better.

 The two English classes above were very different but both were very effective in their own unique way and I respect each professor’s teaching style. Enabler English reading professor taught me how to find essential points when reading through communicating clearly with me. I was not afraid to make mistakes in her class because she always gave me a feedback that could help me upgrade my reading skills. Explainer English grammar professor taught me the basic rules of English grammar very well through explaining them thoroughly. I believe that there are no answers to which class teaching style is better. It is the ability of the teacher to find the most effective teaching method and materials that suit the students’ needs and goals. The teacher must help and guide the students to use their life experience and knowledge to find the answers they are looking. If a teacher could draw out the strengths of a student in class to reach his or her goals, that teacher would be the best teacher a student could ever meet. With this in mind, I want to become a teacher a student can remember for the rest of his or her life.