My Life As A TESOL Certified English Communication Facilitator

K131N-WE Essay

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The ability to use the English language is becoming an important asset and a lot of people, from the young generation to the old generation, want to have good English abilities. As a result, most of English academy, public and private schools in Korea try to hire qualified English teachers and having TESOL certification is becoming a mandatory requirement. What does TESOL stand for? TESOL stands for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language.

I have been teaching English since 2004 without TESOL certification. I did not really think about studying how to teach English. I thought I had quite good English skills because all my native English speaker co-teachers always tell me that my pronunciation is close to a native English speaker and the way I speak English is very natural. I was full of conceit.

As time passed by, I felt the necessity of studying TESOL. The first reason is that there are lots of parents who studied abroad and speak good English. As a teacher I should have better knowledge of teaching language and language systems than those parents. The second reason is that learning never ends. Taking TESOL course is a good chance to learn language systems and skills, classroom management, and various methods from an experienced teacher in educating English teacher field. The third reason is that I want to become a better teacher for myself. That’s why I applied for this TESOL program.

8 weeks of intensive weekend TESOL program is not easy for me because I have a full time job. I work Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sometimes I have to stay late at work. There is not enough time to do TESOL assignments and prepare for the Micro-Teaching. I was and am tired due to lack of sleep. However, I do not regret what I chose to do. Each TESOL class I am acquiring knowledge from the professor and also from my peers.

I still remember the first day at Times TESOL. All the students were nervous, but we could be relaxed after the Ice Breaker Activity. Professor Frank told us we should believe in ourselves. All the students were asked what we thought about our English competency level was. Most of the students underestimated their English competency include me. Professor Frank said it is very important that we believe in ourselves. He said how we would teach students if we could not believe we have good English competency. That moment I realized what I have to learn through this TESOL program. Before I learn good teaching skills, I needed to have faith in me.

At the beginning of the course I wanted to find answers to these three questions: What makes a good English teacher? How can a teacher create a worry-free classroom environment? What are appropriate teaching techniques of the 4 skills of language?   
Through the TESLO course I have learned qualities of a good teacher. In order to become a good teacher, I should be honest with my students. I should give my students equal chances of participation. I should encourage my students learn from mistakes. Most of all I should not ask students do something before I demonstrate it first. I did not demonstrate a lot when I taught my students at work. After I learned the importance of demonstration, I try to apply it in my class and it is working very well. My students felt more comfortable when I did the activity first and then let them do the same activity. In this way I also create a worry-free classroom environment. It is like killing two birds with one stone. When I demonstrate first, students know what to do and worry less about making mistakes.

4 skills of language are reading, writing, speaking and listening. Times TESOL teaches how to teach these 4 skills in communicative way. This is super important. We teach English because we want our students communicate using that language. I thought I taught my students in communicative way, but I did not. Especially when I taught Grammar, I taught students certain formulas of grammar rules such as ‘be + p.p’ for passive voice or ‘have + p.p’ for present perfect tense. English is not Mathematics. As a result of having participated in California State University at Long Beach Kangnam TESOL center TESOL class 131, I have learned what student-centered learning environment means and how to plan my lessons in a communicative way.

I will put an effort to apply the knowledge I have learned in the field and try to become a better English teacher.