TESOL 01 module:

Characteristic of adult learners,
traditional vs. modern classrooms,
teacher types, and effective teaching

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*My Second Language Acquisition in Malaysia*

I first studied English when I was in middle school. My teacher who taught English was an older Korean. I studied in the traditional classroom. Teacher mainly wrote out on the board. The kind of teacher was explainer. Students mainly listened to teacher’s explanation, occasionally answered for questions. It was difficult for me to have better communication and closer relationship in a good learning atmosphere between students and teacher.

After graduating a college, I worked as a businessman for some electronic company for years. I enjoyed my job with coworkers and had a satisfaction at my task. The factory of my company was located in China. My company mainly produced goods of the body of camera with Sony. I studied Chinese and Culture in a college. But I had to communicate with trader workers in English. I decided to study English in Malaysia. One of the most important reasons I decide to go to Malaysia was that Malay, Mandarin Chinese and English are official languages. The tuition fees for studying English was less expensive when compared with other country. There were a lot of places to travel, like Singapore and Thailand while studying in Malaysia.

First of all, I studied English in DLC. The name of my teacher was Timothy Gould. He was a native speaker from England. He allowed me so that autonomous and self-directed learning is going on. He was a teacher that tried to related theories and concepts that sustain students’ interests. He taught students by using a variety of activity. To be specific, he made students read a book so that they take part in a group discussion. Then, he led us get involved in another group study. He enthusiastically encouraged students to participate in class. He had characteristics of effective teacher. He acknowledged the wealth of experiences that students bring to the classroom because there were several adult learners. He treated students as equals in experience and knowledge. He gave students positive feedback so that students understand the subject matter well when studying in. Above all, students followed him well because of especially having a good sense of humor. He empathized with student’s problems through sharing with students after class. He first listened to his students and communicated clearly. I believe that he involved three categories of teaching style such as an explainer, an involver and an enabler. It made students become more effective learning when studying something from teacher Gould.

Second, I spent time on playing badminton with his family in the gym. And I spent time with his family at Queens Bay mall a big shopping mall in downtown. There were many different types of store and venues to visit. For example, there were a large department store, a bookstore and a movie theater. To be specific, we could watch movies at the movie theater and had lunch at the food court. As a result, I believe that he gave me an opportunity to develop three learner modes: visual, auditory, tactile-kinesthetic. I enjoyed my life in Penang, Malaysia and had a great memory for English learning through various activities.

Third, having relationships was a great way to develop social, interpersonal and communication skills. Spending time with people who have backgrounds from various countries made me become more open-minded, which as a result allowed me to better understand other cultures, lifestyles, perspectives and languages. For instance, I and classmates had an effort to meet new people and shared thoughts with them. To be specific, I traveled with my classmates in Singapore. I could relieve stress by enjoying diverse leisure activities in urban areas. Also, visiting a museum helped me understand their history and culture. I believe that these activities enable for me to realize practical learning for adult learners.

In conclusion, I believe that my second language learning in Malaysia was very successful. Learning in class and people who met out of classrooms had me experience for three learner modes: visual, auditory, tactile-kinesthetic, which as a result allowed me to learn how to build relationships through communicating their thoughts and connecting to each other’s feelings. Therefore, I firmly believe that my second language acquisition was successful.