My second language experience as a child

**TESOL 154TC**

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My fifth grade English Writing teacher used to always say, “Not all speakers are writers, but all writers are speakers”. She would always say that in the beginning of the class. She believed that writing is fun and that it is also one of the best ways to improve our English-speaking skills. She believed that writing provides us so much opportunity to improve our speaking skills, as writing helps us improve our language accuracy and eventually helps us gain fluency.

I would say that as a writing teacher, she was very effective. She was very creative, providing us with lots of fun activities and she was very patient and kind. I personally did not like writing. But with her efforts and skills as a teacher, not only did I learn how to express myself in writing but also learn to express myself in speaking English fluently in fun and effective ways. Her approach as a teacher was more on facilitating students rather than controlling them. As a result, we felt more engaged and motivated. Her classes were all student-centered. She would always provide a stimulating environment, making sure that students are learning in a fun and exciting manner.

In the classroom, it was very apparent that she had prepared her lessons very well. She was well-organized and very creative. She would always provide us clear instructions suitable for our age and making sure that we understood the instructions by giving us illustrations. She helped us inspire our intrinsic motivation, giving us a task but letting us choose how to go about it. For instance, she would give us a free writing task and she would call it, “My favorite…” and let us proceed from then by encouraging us to complete the statement on our own and write all about it. That gave us opportunity to write what we wanted rather than what she wanted us to write. I particularly liked that writing task, as it gave us freedom and made us write what we thought was interesting for us. During the entire activity, she would sit at the back of the classroom and quietly observed us and attended to the student whom she thought needed some assistance. Her teaching approach gave us space and surprisingly gave us confidence in what we do. By not supervising us strictly, she gave us chance to be creative and just be ourselves.

With all that being said, I thought that my experience as a child learner in that classroom was a success. The teacher had a clear understanding of what her role as a teacher should be. And that helped her facilitate an engaging, challenging and fun learning environment. She knew how important environment was for the young learners. She would decorate her room with her favorite poems, essays and inspiring quotes, perfect for a writing classroom. Having the right tools and effective approach really made her an effective writing teacher.

Taking this course is certainly an eye-opener for me. Looking back, I realized how I got to like learning English. In the Philippines, we start learning and using English in all pre-school. But it is not just about learning English that students enjoy. It is the learning environment that really interests them. If a teacher provides students with a stimulating, safe and engaging environment that is suitable their age, she will be surprised by the outcome of her efforts. Students will feel secured, engaged and most of all motivated.