Soyeon Kim

August 14, 2018

MY BEST ENGLISH TEACHER

My best teacher was Cody Dillon who taught English in an IELTS class. When I used to live in Sydney, I prepared IELTS to go to the university and I was not satisfied with the previous language school, so I decided to move to a better class with better teacher. I found one which is a famous language school in Sydney and Cody was one of the best teachers in the school. My course was for 14 weeks but I got an extension for 4 more weeks after. The reason for extension was because I loved Cody’s teaching style and my English had improved a lot with his class. Definitely, Cody’s class was a success for several reasons. Firstly, Cody was always ready to offer assistance to me. For example, when I was in trouble with developing my grammar, he pinpointed my drawbacks and recommended a grammar book which was fit for my level. Secondly, he cared all students individually, so he could keep a balance between low and high level students. Also, he had a great sense of humor, so it was hard to find a student who was not concentrating on the class or sleeping. I could get a high score in the IELTS exam after his class and my actual English level has improved since then.

Cody was an enabler, but also an involver. Our classes were always started with bringing up our ideas about ‘this week’s subject’ and after finding great ideas from students, Cody used those ideas to write essays or to answer the speaking test’s questions. It was such a brilliant idea for us to learn how to use our own ideas for writing and speaking sentences because we usually feel difficulty to switch our ideas in native languages into English sentences. In addition, he used lots of materials to explain easily and variously such as news articles, Youtube videos, and pictures. Cody took a mock test on Fridays so that we could see how much we understood about the subjects and skills but also students were often allowed to be examiners to each other like a role play and it was a great chance to check our improvement as well.

I think Cody had a modern teaching style. He loved to encourage us to participate every moment and knew how to make some students who were shy and did not want to participate join the discussions smoothly. I even did not give any opinion in first few weeks because I was not confident to explain my thought in front of others, but Cody made me realize how enjoyable sharing my own opinions is although still making a lot of grammar and vocabulary mistakes. Especially, Cody tried to do group works like analyzing different charts or writing essays with each member’s ideas and words. It worked well because group works were easier to encourage every one’s participation and more efficient for Cody to check each group’s work and give directions. Therefore, the class was able to be student-centered.

Lastly, Cody seemed to understand affective filter hypothesis and apply it to us properly. Our classmates consisted with different levels from intermediate to advanced, so some students feel high-anxiety to make mistakes. However, Cody told us many times how important making mistakes is to be able to learn well and it is much better to spit sentences with mistakes than not to do anything. Moreover, Cody tried to build a strong rapport with students. It was amazing for me when he cared student’s problems with their boyfriends/girlfriends and gave some advices because I had never seen this type of teacher before. There were many students who were dating with different country’s lovers so needed to use English to communicate, and Cody’s advices were actually helpful, so I think the relationship between him and us was effective to be closer to each other and it was also good to make friendly atmosphere. With that comfortable environment, students could find their motivations to learn English, and develop their self-esteem and self-confidence about saying their ideas in English.

In conclusion, I could learn great teaching style as well as English with Cody. Actually, I changed my dream to be an English teacher after his class. The best part of his class was teaching how to exchange the idea in mother tongue to English not just explaining what words are better in this sentence or what grammars are more useful in that sentence. The second best was the skill leading the friendly atmosphere. I loved his attitude to establish good rapport with students even though the topics could be too light to discuss. Also, I realized that group work is really important to create and share student’s ideas and give feedbacks easily and effectively.