‘My Future Adventure as a Teacher of Young English Learners’

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It has been many days since I started taking the TESOL for Children class of the California State University Long Beach Office of Continuing and Professional Education Times Media Certification TESOL for Children Program Class Number one hundred eighty-three. I have learned a lot of techniques to teach English for young learners and had time to think about what impact I will make on my young students and haw they will have a great impact on me.

Since I have taken valuable lessons in this program, I came to be able to plan and prepare an appropriate, student-centered, and effective communication lesson. And I can elicit the individual ideas and thoughts from my students so that they want to join the class activity and participate the class with full of joy. I am also able to give appropriate, clear, and easily understood instructions and facilitate good classroom interaction after practicing that on my presentations. I also practiced monitoring my students effectively in class and contributing to the confidence and self-reliance of my students on my micro-teaching. Most importantly, now I can teach and inspire young learners to want to learn to communicate in English. I came to be able to do all these things by completing TESOL for Children Class.

I actually expected a very different way of learning on this TESOL for Children program. What I expected was the instructor would give me all the materials for English class for young learners and tell me how to use them so that I only need to take all the materials from the class and memorize how to use them for the classes I will have in the future. Of course, there were many skills I have learned how to deal with young learners and how to teach certain things like creating classroom conditions, teaching vocabulary, and eliciting students. But mainly, I had to think of my own way to deliver what I want to give to the young learners for learning English. My instructor did not tell me what to do specifically, he wanted for me to think myself what to do for my future English class. That was a big difference with my expectation. I guess it is because I have been only taken behaviorist approaches classes before I met this program.

There were many responsibilities and assignments in the program. None of them was easy. I faced challenges every time I got to do homework, take a midterm exam, and give presentations. I especially had a hard time writing my first essay since I have never had a chance to write a long essay writing in English before. And introducing my monster presentation was the most challenging assignment for me. I was very confused to catch the concept of making my monster using fantasy. So, I had so much time struggling for completing the introducing my monster presentation. It was not easy, not perfect, but I was proud of myself that I had finished it by myself. In fact, I experienced student-centered learning by going through the introducing my monster assignment. I felt good about I made it and I wanted to develop my monster’s personality later on. After I went through this assignment, I can easily guess how much my students will feel successful and joyful when they have student-centered learning.

As I mentioned at my first essay, I understand that the teacher can have a great impact on their students and make a considerable change in them. Therefore, I want to be an easy-to-use teacher when my students have difficulties like my memorable teachers were. It has not been changed I want to be like them and I have more thoughts in my mind on my experience in TESOL for Children program.

I was given ‘A Teacher’s Story’ on the first day of the class. Looking back to the all classes I have taken, that story was pretty much everything of understanding of the great impact a teacher can have on students. I believe that teacher is not a delivery person of knowledge, a teacher is a facilitator of learning. And students learn from each other as much as they learn from a teacher. I actually learned from my classmates while I was on the program. When they gave presentations and micro teaching, I was surprised by their brilliant ideas and good attitude as a teacher for young learners. One of my classmates was good at getting students paying attention by speaking with joyful and showing positive actions and other person was very well prepared of materials for presentation. Each of them has strength and it was valuable time to learn from them. And it was one other thing that I did not expect before taking the class and it is also related to the student-centered learning.

For the whole time of the classes, I think I often heard that the second language, which is English in my future students’ case, should be taught the way that we learned our first language. So, it is the most important that I think of myself how I have learned Korean, my first language, when I was young. It is not easy since I have grown and I do not remember most of the time learning Korean. Although what I only remember is that I took some dictation test when I was in elementary school, I luckily could see some of process through my daughter. She just babbled for a while after she was born and she started to say “Um-ma (Mom in Korean)” when she was around 11 months old. Since then her vocabulary has been gradually improving by experiencing, imitating, practicing, and making mistakes. It is amazing looking at her how she completes one sentence from nothing. By looking at her, I noticed that people naturally want to express what they want to do and try to talk to communicate with others. And most importantly, I realize that people learn their first language by making so many mistakes.

I truly thank my instructor and classmates for teaching me how to teach English to young learners and making me have time to think about how I will enjoy and succeed as a teacher of English communication to young English learners in the future. I will always keep in mind one of my instructor’s saying, ‘There are no bad students, but there are bad teachers’ and do my best to remember all the things I have learned from TESOL for Children program as a teacher of young English learner.