MJ Kim

December 11, 2018

The reasons why I went to abroad

Most people might have met their best language teacher in their lives, but I have not thought about who was my best teacher in my life. That was because I had met only worst teachers my whole life in Korea. During my school years in Korea, teachers I had met were very boring, and they were only focused on a SAT test. I was trained how to solve the questions of the test quickly. That made me sick of English. That is why the classes were failures. These classes were not effective, interesting, and they were boring. But I had a dream which was to be a flight attendant. I thought the flight attendant must be able to speak English very well, and I could not give up studying English. When I was 20 years old, I decided to go to abroad where my uncle lived to study English.

The first reason why I decided to go abroad is that all teachers I have met before abroad had even traditional styles. They just talked in front of a board with boring voices and stories. Taking notes of everything which was said or written on the board and memorizing were helpful to take a written rest. However when I went to United States of America, it was really useless. At that time, I was bad at speaking and listening. I could not understand what they said and didn’t know how to speak in English, but ESL program which I took in United States of America was different with the previous classes in Korea. The professors who taught me at a University in United States of America were totally different and professional. They tried to make me involve the class and gave a lot of chances to speak out. That was new experience for me. They had modern teaching styles.

Long ago, In Korea, the teachers were explainer, because they never allowed me to share my ideas in the class. They only explained why and what its answer was. They just fit me into a settled right answer. What I could do in the class was taking notes and memorizing. That was because it was not effective classes. That’s the second reason why I made up my mind to go abroad. But the ESL teachers were enabler and involver. They created some conditions in which students freely participate in learning. I did some interesting and new activities. They encouraged me every time without pressure and punishment, and I could get confidence.

While I had been learning English in U.S.A, I could improve my English skill very quickly. The class which I joined was really effective. The teachers had authenticity. Also they knew integrated-skill approach, and they could draw motivation from students easily. The class was student centered. Sometimes I made a presentation and gave a speech. Also I and my classmates who came from other countries discussed about our opinions and teachers. They were able to be ready to listen to students’ ideas. They knew the input hypothesis. I could focus on the class without much pressure. I even never took any notes during class as I did before in Korea. I was just absorbing English. Before abroad, my English was really poor. But for almost 6 months, my English improved very quickly. Learning English was no longer an ordeal any more. I was enjoying learning English. I could see my possibility as well. It was so lucky to be there. That’s the last reason why I wanted to take the ESL program.

The classes I took in the United States of America were memorable to me as fruitful classes both in pleasurable and educational ways. English is not fear anymore to me. After finishing the ESL program, I could know the reality how to learn English in effective and practical ways. Student should study language with comprehensible input in a low-anxiety environment; also teachers should let them know the instructor can reduce language anxiety by adopting an attitude that mistakes are part of the language learning process and that mistakes will be made by everyone. Also, teachers should be enabler and have modern style teaching. Working together, student centered and various useful activities worked for me for very short time. I like to be such a good teacher who has good sense, open minded and skills in good ways. I do not want my students to make the same mistakes as I did. I hope I could be a better teacher.