My best teacher in Switzerland

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Date: 16th Jan. 2019

Word count: 989

When I first received this essay assignment to write about my best teacher in my life, I

could hardly remember any good teachers during my school years and even in my university

or graduate schools.

But I suddenly got something on my mind that there was a good teacher even though I was

too young to remember it out clearly, but I guess she was my best teacher for learning my

very first English as a true beginner.

My father had a chance to work in Basel, Switzerland for nearly 3 years and our family

moved when I was 8 years old.

I went to an International school and I met Mrs. Parker who was our classroom teacher.

From my Essay I would like to introduce her as a Modern, Enabler and Effective teacher.

Also, she was very respectful and gave authenticity to the students.

She had supported and led me to have a high motivation of learning English and could

extend my interest on other foreign language like my major Russian and literature.

I had a high Anxiety of learning English at first because I was in a pre-production stage so

that I couldn’t understand every word or sentences written and spoken by English. But she

really helped me a lot to get involved in the class.

Mrs. Parker was a Modern teacher. She supported me to participate in the class even

though I could not understand clearly. She repeated and used various activities until I have a

clear understanding. We played with different types of methods such as games, flashcards and

role plays so that foreign students could learn English easily and remember it.

We sat down in a group of tables so that we could talk and check with each other.

Since then I started to have great interest in learning English and Mrs. Parker highly

motivated me to get interested in learning English.

If she was a traditional teacher doing ‘jug and mug’ which means just the knowledge being

poured from one receptacle into an empty one, then I would have never started to learn any other languages except my mother tongue.

She was an Enabler teacher. I started from the beginner and became and Intermediate level

when I came back to Korea.

She tried to explain first and gave some time to talk and the students could answer the

questions properly. Furthermore, I created new things by myself which was a great change for

me. I am not sure whether she knew ‘Stephen Krashen’ but it felt like she applied the “Input

Hypothesis”. During the class she stood beside me so that I could directly ask questions if

needed.

She was a real Enabler even though her teaching method happened by the end of 1980’s.

Time and period do not matter defining a good teacher. It is important how to communicate

well with students and student centered might lead to a high participation as well.

Mrs. Parker was an Effective teacher.

I had problems bringing Korean food at lunch time because I brought some kimchi and

some friends hated the smell, and this made me so embarrassed. She told the students that the

food we are eating is different, so you must understand each country’s culture. Even though it

was nothing to do with the class, she was so respectful and was authentic to the students.

After she did that I could eat well at lunch time.

Whenever my confidence was getting lower, she always gave clear and positive feedback so

that I could have self-confidence, self-esteem, motivation and low anxiety.

Many Korean students are learning English everywhere and many people are emphasizing

much on learning, but the important thing is that they cannot speak well due to one-way

teaching and only lecture based with chalk and talk system. This old tradition still exists and

many students are losing the chance to speak real live English.

I feel a pity that the students are just sitting in chairs for better grades and lose their time to

talk in English.

From Stephen Krashen’s speech the acquisition must be more than 95% of the class which

means we need to use the grammar, and this might help students learn faster.

I felt this message was exactly talking to me because I did not start to learn grammar first like

other students in Korea, but I started to talk by listening and participating with activities

through friends and that might be a ‘Comprehensible Input’ as well.

If I had not adequate input like studying grammar first and learning how to speak then I

think I might have stayed in the pre-intermediate level until now.

I thank Mrs. Parker who gave high motivation of learning English and I am quite

proud of myself that I can communicate well with people without any difficulties. I might

have some grammatical errors but indeed no one really matters for that.

When you learn a language, I guess students must have high Motivation, Self Esteem and

Zero Anxiety. And teachers can build a good rapport with the students.

In my opinion Speaking is more important because we are now living in a 21st century and

English is like a global language to make a big connection from all over the world. And if

Korean students can speak much better than just making better grades then it would be much

brighter in the future.

When I become a teacher, I will be a Modern, Enabler, Effective teacher and will have a good

rapport with students.

I will help students to make 90% of retention rates through teaching and mentoring

techniques in class. Also, I will be barley visible when students are active.

I will have an Integrated Skill approach in order to make students to use all four skills

(Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking) in a lesson.