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800 words

My teacher for Elementary Biblical Hebrew was the worst language teacher that I studied under. Her name is Dr. Eun Jung Kim. She was a visiting professor because our regular Hebrew professor was on sabbatical that semester. She taught me at Torch Trinity Graduate University in Seoul, Korea where I am currently attending as a Master’s of Divinity student. Dr. Eun Jung Kim did not seem to care if we learned how to speak Biblical Hebrew. It seemed like she just wanted us to memorize vocabulary words and grammar rules and paradigms. I could have learned straight from the Hebrew textbook because her lectures were summaries each chapter of the Hebrew textbook. Because there was no speaking in class besides repeating grammar paradigms, I learned how to pronounce Hebrew words and alphabet from the internet outside of class. What I remember about her the most is when she told me to review the textbook and memorize the grammar paradigm after I asked her a question on the grammar. Dr. Eun Jung Kim style of teaching was traditional, primarily an explainer and not effective as a teacher.

Dr. Kim was a teacher who taught in a traditional style. The only modern technique that she used was a Power Point presentation but the presentation was simply a summary of the Hebrew textbook much like a talk and chalk traditional style of teaching. We met twice a week and had a grammar and vocabulary quiz every class period which was not reviewed or given back to us until a week before each midterm and final exams. There was very little interaction between the students and the teacher. The class would have been a better learning environment if there was speaking between teacher and student and/or student and student. The final exam was a translation of specific Bible verses that were given to us beforehand. We just had to memorize the Bible verses. I learned how to memorize vocabulary and Bible verses, but, I did not learn much about communicating in Biblical Hebrew either speaking or writing. And, my reading comprehension of Biblical Hebrew is close to zero. If she was more of a modern teacher with student participation and interaction, it would have given me more self-motivation to learn Biblical Hebrew.

Dr. Eun Jung Kim was primarily an explainer. She primarily lectured us and with quizzes and tests every week. The only time we spoke or practiced Hebrew was repeating the grammar paradigms that she was lecturing on. If she was more of an enabler, I would have been way more motivated to learn Biblical Hebrew and would be more proficient in Hebrew today. An enabler would have allowed us to create our own ideas so we could learn from ourselves. An enabler would have let us interact with each other in Hebrew and we would have been more literate in Biblical Hebrew. If she was an enabler, I would have been motivated to study the textbook and she would not have to lecture on the textbook as a 3primary tool for teaching.

Dr. Kim was an ineffective teacher for a number of reasons. Firstly, she lacked the qualities of an effective teacher. Authenticity is a quality of an effective teacher and she was not genuine or authentic. She was not herself, but, just a robot that summarized the textbook every week. She had no empathy which is another quality of an effective teacher for the students in our class. She did not care if we were struggling with Hebrew or not. She kept lecturing whether we understood or not. There was no respect for us as a learner or human being. Not only did she not have the qualities of an effective teacher, she did not teach with an integrated skill approach. The only skill that she taught is the listening skill. Even the her speaking and the students listening was not conversation in Hebrew. It was a vocabulary word here and there with some grammar paradigms mixed in. If she integrated the four language skills, she would have been much more effective as a teacher. Reading, listening, writing and speaking skills were never integrated in any lesson during the whole semester of class.

Learning from Dr. Eun Jung Kim was not a good experience for me. I did not learn or remember much Biblical Hebrew even though I received a B in the class. Her traditional style of teaching, as well as, her being an explainer and her lack of authenticity with not using an integrated skill approach was the reason for her being an ineffective teacher. I plan on not teaching like Dr. Kim. I hope that my style of teaching will be modern as an enabler with authenticity using an integrated skill approach.