Kara, Worst teacher

188th WD TESOL

Violet(A Young Gwak)

879 words

Her name was Kara, she was my English teacher when I was in Canada

as an ESL student. I studied in the academy for 5 months. Unfortunately, I

recalled Kara as the worst teacher in my life so far. In my memory, she was really

tall, light brown goldish hair, wore glasses and talked very fast. She always had a

high-tension attitude. According to it she was enthusiastic for teaching and

made many activities all the time. But at that time I really needed academic

English in order to get a high score of IELTS. I did not want to learn something

through songs or role play. I wanted my grammar and writing to be perfect. I

wanted to study not to sing a song. Kara was the textbook of interpersonal and

verbal-linguistic enabler. So her every class was plentiful. Nevertheless, in my case,

she definitely was not an effective teacher for me. Let us find out why.

I remember when I first came into her classroom. Long black boots and

her very fast speed of talking captured my eyes. She never stopped talking.

When she let us do some worksheets, she was even humming or singing while

we were doing our thing. She was so chatty and had a great talent of making

students laugh only by speaking. During the break time, she was always hanging

out with students and they loved enjoying time with her. Based on this, I surely

assume that she had verbal linguistic and interpersonal intelligence. In the 1980s

Howard Gardner who is like Einstein of education theory created the theory of

multiple intelligence. He thought individuals have at least seven distinct

intelligences that can be developed over a lifetime. In Kara's case, her strength

was showing words and having a good interpersonal relationship with people.

Normally I would have wanted a class like her style but I needed the opposite

character of her style.

One of the memorable activities she created was ‘Listen and tell'. Make a

group of 5, leader whispered a sentence to one member in their team, each

member should tell the next member, and finally, the last member memorizes

what the sentence was and wrote on the board. I remembered this game

because the sentences were not easy and the game was very fun. She created a

lot of activities that were beyond your imagination. Sometimes we could not

understand her in the class and we had a hard time to listen to her explanations

of grammar. But generally, we had to do many things on our own. So she was

not just an explainer or involver. She was an enabler. I participated a lot for the

class but I didn't like it quite much. Because I did not want my class to be active

and noisy. I wanted my teacher to explain seriously about how to improve

grammar more or how to write formally writing.

During the five months, I could not stop thinking of whether Kara was a

good teacher and this class was good for me. After the five months, I asked

myself ‘Was she an effective teacher for me?' My answer was no. There are 3

major points of effective teaching. Empathy, authenticity, and respect. She did

not have any empathy for me. I usually asked many questions about grammar

and wanted to talk with her about IELTS because I wanted to go to college there.

But every time I asked her she just could not get why I focused on writing not

speaking. She did not have any empathy. I can say she had authenticity and

respect. I never doubt her about who she was. She was so sincere about her class.

Many students, even other teachers respected her. I respected her. Her style just

wasn’t effective for me.

In retrospect, I felt sorry to myself and her for what I felt afterward. It was

tough and sometimes her class was even torturing me. I can not say that I

learned nothing from Kara's class but I could not learn what I wanted to learn.

Although she was the typical enabler, I would have loved if she lectured me or

gave any comments and corrections about my writing. Ironically I love speaking,

writing in English and I hate grammar. I think I have the same intelligence as Kara.

Especially ability to use words both orally and in writing which can be named as

verbal-linguistic. I imagined that the time of five months was the most interactive

opportunity for learning English in my experience due to her strong interpersonal

intelligence. She had many things that I have to follow for teaching. For example

authenticity, respect, humor, well organized, an enthusiasm for the class and etc.

I want to teach like her in the future. For what it is worth, she was kind of a type

of an ideal teacher. Thus by definition, I would say I want to be a teacher like

Kara. Just the problem is because of her big lack of empathy for me made me

think that her teaching was not effective. She could have been an excellent

teacher for many students but she just was not right teacher for me.