Men, Materials and Methods in Retrospect

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Looking back over the 48 years of my life as an English teacher, my purposes and aims of teaching, learning and studying English have been enlightenment, empowerment, encouragement, enrichment and enjoyment through English for both of my students and myself. Throughout my career, I have met various Men, Materials and Methods and I have been influenced and supported by them so much. I would like to confess how I could have survived all these years in a Paradise called Asahikawa with these three Ms in relation to the current English teaching situation in Japan.

First I will talk about men who influenced me to pursue my career. Mr. K, my elementary school teacher, for example, made me interested in English when he told us pupils about UNESCO. I will talk about some teachers, colleagues and students who have supported and influenced me all these years.

What to teach and learn is very important for both us, and I will talk about the materials in which my students showed most interest in my classes, some of which were Wordsworth’s poems, topics in a used textbook, a speech in Macbeth by Shakespeare, an Ainu folk tale, My Fair Lady, rakugo (Shibahama), English enkas, the speech ‘I Have A Dream’ by Rev. King and so on. I would like to show how my students and I enjoyed these materials.

How to teach and learn English has been a big problem for me to this day. Trials and errors have been my method, which is the mixture of all the methods I have known, though I am still deeply in love with Grammar Translation Method. I wonder if I have been qualified to be in charge of the English teaching methodology classes.