WHICH IS BETTER? Learning vs Acquisition

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When I was in elementary school from 1992 to 1998 , I learned English for the first time in my life.

I was excited in being at a new language class. Every English class hour, I watched video or sang a song in English. My favorite class was English.

Nevertheless, I thought I was a failure relation to my language learning experience.

The reason is as follows.

My first reason is that My second language (English) no longer was language acquisition. It was only Learning.

As I entered middle school, English class emphasized on grammar, phonology and vocabulary. I didn’t have a great time there, while studying English.

My English teacher taught me harshly. He crammed knowledge into my head.

During my junior school, interesting and kind of natural English language acquisition time changed an examination subject learning time.

I’d always be under such pressure for better English grades.

My other English teachers were almost the same throughout my middle and high school years.

The second reason is my language skills weren’t well balanced.

I was educated in the traditional class environment such as cramming education,

focusing on college entrance exams etc. So I was expected to receptive skills (listening, reading) but lacked productive skills(writing, speaking).

For these reasons I thought I was a failure in second language acquisition.

In conclusion, I can tell some important facts what I discovered through my failure at learning a second language and also there is another interesting fact, too.

I have learned English in Korea by traditional methods. This environment affected me to ne a negative learner. However it is just not my story but almost all Korean students have this similar experience.

After the first week of TESOL program, I found out my English teachers were explainers. They were mainly dependent on explaining or lecturing as a way of conveying information to students. Explainer of teaching style delivered lots of information to students. But much knowledge is too difficult for some students to digest. In addition forcing students to take foreign language classes will not ensure mastery of the language.

I hope I don’t forget that Stephen Krashen’s Theory of second language acquisition consists of five main hypothese:

The acquisition-learning hypothesis,

The monitor hypothesis,

The natural order hypothesis,

The input hypothesis,

And the affective filter hypothesis.

Especially Stephen Krashen said “conscious learning is less important than acquisition.” I agree with what he says .

If I have an opportunity to teach English, I’ll try to offer a relaxing Environment and comprehensible in-put to students.

Of course having chances good teachers and taking various teaching methods are very important but more important thing is that students’ motivation for learning and finding their intelligences about second language correctly. Now I am learning English teaching skills in totally different methods as compared from my junior and high school and I can concentrate all of these courses in positive side because I have already experienced the failure. I can categorize what method of learning a second language will be received to students efficiently.

I assure that all my experiences and what I’m learning from TESOL course will help me to be a good teacher.

The more I learn, the more I can teach my students!