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TESOL 01: Second Language Acquisition Assignment

There are many elements that impact on the result of learning a second language for adults. Also, it is not easy to accept a whole different language for adults after they had set up with the linguistic mechanism of their mother language. Therefore, a second language environment is very important for learning it.

People say unconscious learning is a good way to learn a second language. we can use various ways to expose ourself to the second language to get used of it such as listening radio and watching TV. However, unlike child learners, unconscious learning of a second language seemed not quite possible for adult learners. Adult second language learners cannot just simply utter or produce a fully formed sentence without knowledge of the structure and properties of the second language. There should be a proper way to educate adult learners besides unconscious learning. Malcolm Knowles noticed the differences of this between adult learners and child learners and made a theory called 'Andragogy' which is a adult education theory. In this theory, he said there are particular characteristics of adult learners. So if you understand those characteristics of adults learner, you can teach them more effectively. Based on this theory, one of my second language learning experience was a success. I was just done with intermediate classes and started taking a advanced class. Even though I had lots of inputs from classes before, I didn't have many chances for output. In the advanced class, the teacher was different. Every class he picked the topic we may feel interested in and told us some words which is needed to know before we start to debate the topic. He didn't ask us memorize some random words. He just explain the words which was needed for the debate topic. It was one of the characteristics of adult learners. Adults are relevancy-oriented. We tried to memorize those words because those were related to the class and debate, and we wanted to say something in the debate. I don't think we would memorize some random words if the teacher asked us to memorize. The class was not a lecture style class. It was more a discussion and group activities. There were more chances to participate in so it make us to get involved in the class more deeply. The teacher was also a good educator who used different types of activities for each intelligence type. Howard gardener made the theory of multiple intelligence. He said that there are at least seven distinct intelligences that can be developed over a lifetime. They are verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual, musical, bodily, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist intelligences. The teacher in advanced class used at least 4 intelligence activities to develop our distinct intelligences and it worked.

After taking that class, I was more balanced with receptive and productive skills. So I found the second environment that I have experienced was a success for many reasons. The successful second language acquisition doesn't come with a particular reason. Different types of elements can have impact on second language environment such as teacher types, effective teaching and characteristics of adult learners. To make a successful second language acquisition, we need more effort to understand adult learners from various theories and make better teaching plan to get them their goal.