Tesol 1 : Second Language Acquisition Assignment

There were 3 stages in my English learning environment.

Age 11~13 : I was voluntarily interested in learning English. It was mostly from my father’s influence though, who connected me to an American pen pal. I was too young to write an English letter so my father was my translator. Just having a pen pal was exciting and made me feel like learning more and more of English. I listened to English tapes to practice basic words to learn by my own. It was a good start!

Age 14~23 : I learned English from schools with bit more of pressure from teachers. I recall this time as GTM era. Most of students at that time didn’t have enough chances to practice ‘speaking’. Most English teachers were ‘explainer’ style, which made me get bored of developing my English skill.

I expanded my ability of vocabulary and grammars at this time but not for productive skills like speaking and writing. This triggered me of enrolling English writing class and speaking class in a private institute later.

After that, I started working for a trading company and was heavily emerged in English environment. This is my 3rd stage of learning English. I never studied grammar or tried to memorize vocabulary at that time. Only what I tried was speaking with courage within my own limited vocabulary. If I tried to make sentences from Korean to English with directly translated words, it wouldn’t sound natural to my native English teacher. It was a success!

When I look back on my past experience, I was able to improve productive skills of my English as an adult learner with higher motivation from work. My goal was clear and work related environment was also encouraging. It is totally understandable (or understanding?) about Malcolm Knowles’ “Characteristics of Adult Learners” because that is totally my case.

What I feel pity about is my school time when teachers did “Chalk & Talk” and didn’t seem to care that much if students were learning or not. Unfortunately most of my English teachers were “The explainer”. I almost lost my interest in English at this time.

Based on my past experience and study from Tesol Module1, following observations are what I think my old English teachers could have done better with as well as what I want to practice for my future students.

1. Create Safe and Friendly environment with Motivation and Commitment

It could’ve been better if students were motivated or teacher’s letting them refreshed their goals before starting a class or register. Self-commitment about their goal achievement will be a good vaccination to continue their effort till the end.

Safe and comfortable atmosphere will be very basic for trust build-up between teacher and students.

1. Interactive and Participative activities

Language exists among people. Students can do homework with book at home but as much as interactive activities in class. Utilizing various games and quiz will be helpful to keep students’ attention.

Letting students involve doing things themselves with role-play, e.g. ordering a restaurant menu, booking a flight ticket, etc. will be also effective. One thing to make sure is everyone is participating in any activity.

1. Students become Teacher, Teacher becomes a Mentor

I think ultimate goal of teaching is for students become a teacher. Not only for students learning language, but if were students free from fear and feel confident about what they learn, it will be rewarding to teacher. When teacher contribute this environment, teacher can become a mentor to students, who offers more beyond of knowledge.

Thank you for having an opportunity for me to review what I learned and practice expressing it in an essay.