**TESOL 97 WD**

**Second Language Acquisition Assignment**

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I have lived in English speaking countries for 7 years. I had my education in English and most of my teachers were native English speakers. However, I am little hesitated to say these facts since I am still more comfortable with Korean culture and language. I was exposed to an environment where I could learn English naturally, so I could speak and write in English easier than people from non-English speaking countries. When I was in an international school, I seldom spoke in English in and out of the class because there were a lot of Koreans and I felt comfortable hanging out with them. When I was in College in the U.S., I could skip ESL courses ‘luckily’ and joined ‘high’ level English class. But it was not lucky actually. The difficulty of the class was too high for me and I could barely pass the class. I did not follow one of Krashen’s hypotheses called ‘The Natural Order hypothesis’.

As I think back, I never learned English in an English class except in Korea. My English was proofed only for the grammar errors in my college writing center for my essay from health related course classes. When I studied abroad, not a single teacher understood the difference between Korean and English. They said my English had no grammar error but awkward. I thought there were only some sentence structure differences but it took long time for me to realize there is an English way of thinking. Now I understand the phrase ‘language is culture’. Even though a person writes and reads a lot, it is very important to be involved in a target language culture and try to think in L2.

I want to introduce some effective learning experiences from my classes. They can be applied to the second language learning class, too. Sometimes a teaching method from a traditional classroom can be as effective as a method from a modern classroom. When I think of a good teacher I had in my school days, my organic chemistry professor, prof. Pontrello, comes in my mind. It was a traditional classroom with 200 students and he used ‘chalk and talk’ method most of the time for the chemical mechanisms. When he uses black board for explaining the chemical concepts, he used easy and neatly written words as well as well summarized contents for the students. Chemistry concepts were very complicated even on the textbooks, but his notes helped students to study easily after the class and the important concepts he covered during the class were obvious to the students. Students could feel his respect for his students by looking at his well-arranged notes on the board since it reflected his preparedness for the class. Some teachers just write random words on the black board that confuse students if that was the important concept in the class or not. ‘Chalk and talk’ method can be used effectively in modern language learning class for students to summarize and review their work after the class only if it is not used for the whole class time.

He was encouraging students a lot to visit his office if we had any questions. He opened his 3-hour office hours everyday and this might have been a big time consuming for him. Sometimes, I was lazy to visit him and felt shameful not understanding the easy concept, but he never broke ‘The Affective Filter Hypothesis’ by Krashen. He shared his difficulties as an undergraduate student and his teaching experience helped himself to be aware of common mistakes students made. Also, when I visited his office, there were many other students who had similar questions. I was relived to see that I was not the only one who did not understand. He used a lot of drawings, various examples, and 3-dimensional molecular models to demonstrate and answer students’ questions during office hours. He could have used them during class time, but office hours could be his one of the answers to the class time limitation problem. It was worth visiting him for sure and it encouraged students to study to visit the professor.

Most of the people become nervous when they were told they would have a level test even though they are good at it. I also try to avoid the level test as far as possible, but I know the importance of the level test now. When we went through Krashen’s ‘The Input Hypotheses’, I could not agree more. I took a class in my college and I just chose it since I had no choice for another one. The class required a lot of reading. The students were asked to write a short essay online before the class and to discuss their thoughts during the class. Krashen stated ‘The Reading Hypothesis’, but the level of the reading assignments was too high for me. All the professional terms were very new to me and a voluminous reading lost my interest. Since the class discussion was based on the reading, I could not involve in the class, too. I knew this class was needed for my graduation and that could be my goal for this class. However, I did not find any relevance to my future career and it was i + 10, not i + 1. This class was goal-oriented but not relevancy-oriented and practical to me. Finally, I dropped this class.