**Personal experience about learning second language**

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Like many other people who are educated in Korea, English was going to be my second language until I started to listen Japanese rock music. When I was a middle school student, one of my friends recommended me to listen to X-Japan which was very popular rock band in Japan at that time. I was captivated by their music and started to seek out all of the video clips about them. Then I was long for figuring out what they were singing about and decided to write a fan letter to the bassist, named Heath, I had been fell in love with. It was the very motivation for me to study Japanese and my mother was pleased to pay for language institute when I told her I wanted to learn it.

I chose to continue studying Japanese at the university in order to deepen understanding about this foreign language. I, however, experienced a severe slump after one and a half year of my school life even though I got a quite good mark in my specialty. I had a sort of social phobia at that time, so I spent whole my summer vacation in watching Japanese dramas — just lying in bed and watching them more than a half of days for two months.

I thought my vacation was just waste of time at first but it did not take a long time to find out that my Japanese had improved enormously — my friends told me that I spoke perfect Japanese when I was drunk! Now come to think of it, during the period which I regarded as ‘waste of time’, my visual and auditory senses were continuously stimulated by an ocean of data and they were all stored in the ‘subconsciousness’ area of my brain. I just did not know how to pull out the information from subconsciousness to consciousness.

Six months later from my first slump, I faced to another barrier again. It was the next day I arrived in Tokyo to study Japanese more. I went to McDonald and tried to order a burger but my mouth did not move at all — I could not say even a single word. I had no choice but to point some photos with my finger to order my lunch. I was really shocked that I could not order a burger in Japanese even though I had already passed second grade of Japanese Language Proficiency Test!

I worried seriously about this situation and I started to change my environment step by step. I tried to have a conversation in Japanese with my roommate - she was one of my college friends - and we always turned on the TV when we did not talk to each other. I found a part-time job where I had to speak Japanese only. I also became one of the regular customers of a bar which was near my school. Master and other customers of the bar were all kind and warm-hearted so I liked there very much — we became friends soon. They did not point out the mistakes I made when I talked in Japanese unless I required them to correct my errors. Helped by new friends and power of the alcohol, I felt confident and comfortable about using Japanese.

Now I do not get nervous at all when I have to use Japanese any longer. I even think in Japanese without translating Korean into Japanese — I use Japanese like I use my mother tongue. I can watch Japanese dramas or movies without subtitles; I can hear Japanese news with very little concentration; I can write business emails in Japanese with complicated structure; I can deliver a presentation in Japanese using formal tones; and, of course, I can make an informal conversation with Japanese people.

My final goal of studying English is to use English like I use Japanese. I am trying to expose myself to English environment, but it is not easy in Korea unless I work in a foreign company. Fortunately, I am taking TESOL course at the moment so that I can be an interpersonal learner here. I desperately hope to be a person who deserves to get the TESOL certificate.