Times Tesol

Hannah Kim

11.05.2016

<Experience of my second language acquisition>

A lot of people are able to learn and grow through their life experiences. I also had some experiences that gave me a great opportunity to learn and grow. One of them is experience of second- language acquisition and it was a success. The reasons why the experience was successful are I had gone to another country to learn a second language when I was young. Additionally, I had met some wonderful teachers who helped me to learn and adjust to new surroundings. Lastly, I was able to see a bigger world and initiate the second language acquisition readily.

I had a great chance to study abroad in another country, United States, when I was a high school student. I spent my very first year with an American home-stay family. Living with an American family was an excellent opportunity for me to learn natural -life communications and new cultures. Through a process of subconscious acceptance of knowledge, I was able to improve my English more readily and adjust to new environment (reference). Since it was an Experimental Learning method, it was very practical and survival way of learning a second language that applies to a real life during that time. Although it was a difficult challenge for me to understand what I had heard at the beginning, I had an internal motivation to learn English and absorb a new environment.

Moreover, when I look back on my times in United States, I had met some wonderful teachers who helped me to learn and progress. Teachers I remember most are the supportive teachers who genuinely listened to me and gave me clear and positive feedback (reference). Because of their encouragements and advices, I was able to fear less, face many challenges and try my best. They are the involver and enabler who built positive relationship and rapport with students (reference). Those strong connections between teachers and students led students to engage more in class and created positive learning environments (reference).Additionally, most classes were modern classroom settings (reference). There were many interactions between students and teacher. Students had a lot of cooperative learning, such as group discussions, sharing variety of sources and students’ diverse ideas. I had the opportunity to observe students thinking independently and discussing the material given to them, which was in stark contrast to the educational system in South Korea. As a product of both kinds of educational systems, I developed a unique way of thinking and a wider perspective of the world.

Furthermore, as I am a visual/spatial leaner, studying in another country was the most important experience in my life. I was able to see a bigger world, get diverse inspirations from them and have a broad perspective. I also learned how to think and analyze from all angles and perspectives. This experience certainly helped me to acquire second language more readily and promoted my desire to learn.

I believe my experience of second language acquisition was a success. Living on my own in another country expanded my horizons. Studying in United States helped my inputs to go through the affective filter (reference), which also promoted my intrinsic motivation to learn. Especially, spending time among the many different races and cultures taught me how to respect and accept the differences that exist among individuals.