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My experience of L2 Acquisition – a success or a failure ?

Acquisition is a way to acquire a second language more subconsciously and naturally. Stephen Krashen defines language acquisition doesn’t require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules and doesn’t require tedios drill. From the above point of view, my second language acquisition is a failure

First, when I was in the first grade of middle school, I first learned English as a Second language. Back then, there were over 50 students in my classroom which was Traditional Classroom, on the first day of English class, we learned about alphabets and grammar. Teachers emphasized Lexis and Grammar among 5 language systems- lexis, grammar, phonology, function, discourse. There weren’t Assessing Language Proficiency at all. Students in one classroom looked at a blackboard and took notes while teachers were giving lectures. Visual and Kinesthetic mode were hardly used in the class. They were completely explainer who knew the subject matter well and explained grammar or vocabulary. Also I think the teachers at that time had no concept of Rapport between the student and the teacher. Students didn’t experience group cooperative learning or demonstration by teacher. The teacher valued students to get good grades on the test rather than learn second language well.

Secondly When I was graduated high school, I didn’t speak English a word, but English was so interesting that I wanted to go to University and study more. Expecting University to be different from high school……Unfortunately, My expectation was too high. Classes at University weren’t much different from high school. The professor focused on Visual and Linguistic classes among the Multiple intelligence Theory which was created by Howard Gardner. Actually there are 8 kinds of multiple intelligences such as logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, verbal/linguistic and naturalist. If they had used those Multiple intelligence theories appropriately to teach English as Second language, many students would not have been to foreign countries to study. I think, they didn’t know the difference between Studying and Acquisition, so professors couldn’t be blamed for their poor teaching skills. Three years after entering university, I decided to go abroad to study English for six months in Australia. It was different from the way I had been learning since taking the level test, but studying with similar level students reduced the anxiety of speaking English. Assessing Language Proficiency which consists of 7 levels - Beginner, false beginner, high beginner, low intermediate, intermediate, high intermediate and advanced, every student took level tests and then they took classes at their own levels. The atmosphere of class was completely new. Students paired up to discuss and draw conclusions even if their English was quite poor. It was such an acquisition not a Studying. As for Learner Retention Rates, the discussion and presentation classes are much more S.T.T(students talk time) which leads to a higher Learner Retention Rates than T.T.T(teachers talk time). The teachers I met in Australia were involver and enabler. At that time, as I mentioned I couldn’t speak English a word but teachers friendly asked many questions, waiting for my answers patiently. Unfortunately, it was a short time to improve all about Second Language but I experienced How to learn Second language acquisition effectively. I think Language acquisition occurs when learner receive messages they can understand, which is known as Comprehensible Input. Comprehensible input should be one step above the learners current level. If it is not, then the learner will not be able to acquire anything new.

In conclusion, the ways I learned Second language were too passive, text based, chalk and talk and jug & mug, which is traditional teaching. Those things made me a student who is influenced by affective filter. Although my major was English, I’ve had difficulty in communicating with native speakers. That’s why my experience of second language Acquisition is Failure. But Instead of giving up, I thought about what I had learned and learned what I have to learn through this Tesol course. For Effective Teaching, I will listen to the students, make the communication clear, and try to give the students clear and positive feedback. Also I will keep in mind rapport between teacher and student.

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