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Essay Topic: My experience of L2 Acquisition – a Success or Failure?

L2 acquisition means a way of learning a second language after your first language has been learned. It is similar to the way people learn their first language. My experience of L2 English Acquisition was unsuccessful. In this essay I will discuss my experience from the time I started learning English at age 12 to the time I graduated from university in Korea. As my major in the university was English literature, I learned English more than 10 years in Korea.

When I was young, there was no English subject in primary schools. My mom sent me to an English academy before I entered a junior high school. I remember I enjoyed learning a new language – English. **Rapport** between the teacher and me was not bad. She encouraged the students in her class and told us interesting stories about English words and the countries whose people use English since we were all beginners who first learned English. I can say she had some characteristics of **effective teaching**. However, I remember there was no **classroom dynamics** in the academy at all and she did not care of **individual learner differences**. She taught us the contents in the textbooks, let us listen to the native speakers’ reading through an audio equipment in the classroom with just all white walls and gave us some homework. She didn’t care how different we were during the lessons.

In the junior high school and high school, rapport between me and English teachers was weak. In this period, all the teachers I experienced did **traditional teaching**. The English classes were teacher centered and lecture based. They were quite strict and taught a certain of volume of phonology, lexis and grammar from the textbook every time. They read some sentences, introduced new vocabularies and explained the grammars of the sentences. Of course sometimes we could listen to the native speakers’ reading through audio cassettes. However, I learned little of the rest **language systems** which are function and discourse. They usually said to us to come and ask after class was finished if we were unclear or had any question. And they gave us some homework like memorizing the vocabularies and writing some sentences we learned during the class. It means their classes were mostly focused on listening and writing which are receptive **language skills**.

It was not quite different in the university. Most of the professors were explainers among the **three teacher types**. Rapport was even weaker and desk arrangement was rows and columns almost same with the previous ones. Teacher talk time was long but students could rarely have an opportunity to talk during the class. Sometimes the professors prepared visual things such as power point presentation but mostly lectures. I remember that the text book of the subject English Literature such as poems, novels and plays. That book was as thick as the Bible and the professor read one or two and then let us do so by ourselves every class. Even the main subject in the university was focused on those low rates of techniques which are lecture and reading among the **learner retention rates**.

All of these factors made me to have the affective filter and monitor myself. When I first started learning English, my motivation was very high and I enjoyed it a lot for real. However, as I experienced that kind of teachers and learned English in those ways, the motivation got lower and lower and anxiety got so high. I was often scared of the strict teachers and my anxiety reached the peak every mid-term and final test not to make any error. There were many parts I was not clear with but the atmosphere was not that active or comfortable to ask a question during the class. I just studied English to get high scores from the tests and to enter a good and famous university. I was definitely the rule-former between the **types of learners**.

**Stephen Krashen** said, acquisition is only possible if a student’s motivation and self-esteem is high and anxiety is zero. According to his hypotheses, my L2 acquisition is failure. Before I learned the module 1 Language & Learning, I did not know the fact that these factors greatly affect L2 acquisition like this. This assignment was not easy for me but will be a big help for my future career to be a happy teacher.

Word count: 748