**My experience of L2 Acquisition - a Success or Failure?**

**Second Language Acquisition** is the development of a second language (L2) after the first language (L1) has been established in which the process is somewhat similar to how the first language was acquired. To illustrate my experience as a success in L2 Acquisition I will discuss the events that occurred as I left for Australia as a 7 year old boy.

I still remember my first day at school in Australia because I could tell that I was different to the rest of the students and the distinction was clear, I was not speaking in the language that everyone else was, English. **Stephen Krashen’s acquisition-learning hypothesis** states that there are two ways in developing our linguistic skills: acquisition and learning. The former comes off as a more natural way in how we acquire a language. And my experience portrays how I was able to acquire English as a second language. At a very young age I was very curious and eager to learn, and English was no different. The fact that I wasn’t able to get along with my classmates must have played a huge role in helping me pick up English much faster.

I wasn’t able to comprehend anything that was being said in class during the first few months but it didn’t take long before I began to speak or at least tried to. The **classroom dynamics** was another contributing factor to the rapid growth in my fluency. The positive atmosphere of the classroom made me feel comfortable with the other students and also with the teacher both of which are signs of good **rapport**. I remember we sat around in circles during class and even though I couldn’t understand a single word it definitely made me feel included. My teacher’s **modern teaching** style is apparent that I favoured the modern classrooms over the traditional. Out of the **three categories of teaching** I believe my teacher at the time was an **involver.** She knew how to get the class engaged and the S.T.T was very high.

While preparing for this essay I became aware of some interesting facts about acquiring a second language from my own experience. After learning about the two different **types of learners**, it became evident to me that as a beginner who couldn’t understand a single word of English that I was a **data-gatherer** however as I started to slowly make progress I consciously became aware of the mistakes I was making by observing the reactions of other students which naturally developed some aspects of the **rule-former**. I remember an experience where I was trying to say the word “robot” but my pronunciation must’ve been wrong because the other student kept repeating the word back to me and that’s when I first became aware of pronunciations. This particular experience also displays that from a single event that multiple **learner modes** were being used. The use of visual and auditory sense when observing the reaction of the other student and the kinesthetic as I applied what I learnt to practice.

As the months went by I slowly began to understand what the other students were saying, and it didn’t occur to me at the time but looking back it was a very strange experience. I had subconsciously accepted English as a means of communication. By the end of the year I had attained the ability to not just listen and speak but also to read and write, all **four** **language skills**. What’s interesting is that I have never learnt about the concept of **language systems** but I was speaking English at a fluent level after just one year! Now I could go onto saying that I am a fast learner but that wouldn’t be fair on my teacher and friends from back then. However I do want to mention the fact that exposure was a significant factor in acquiring my second language. As I was constantly exposed in an environment where speaking English was the norm, I had to catch on sooner or later.

Stephen Krashen mentions that there is one way and only one way to acquire a language, when we begin to understand the messages and he calls this comprehensible input. We acquire language when we understand what people tell us, not how they say it but what they say. My experience clearly outlines how I was able to acquire English in the very same manner as my L1.

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