[Essay Assignment]

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**“Learning acquisition as a second language”**

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**Key Terminology**

Grammar Translation Method (GMT): used for the purpose of helping students read and appreciated foreign language literature for helping them speak and write their native language better.

Direct Method: conveyed directly in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids, with no recourse to the students’ native language.

Explainer: teacher knows the subject matter well, but not teaching methods only explaining or lecturing.

Involver: teacher knows subject matter, teaches methods as well, uses different teaching styles and makes an active environment for students to learn.

Enabler: decides on teaching materials with students, knows the subject matter, teaching methods and people skills well and students actively can be involved.

Behaviorist Theory: as a first language, children can mostly learn key words from their parents or people around them, repeat those words and copy from other people. Environment makes contribution what they are learning.

Interaction Theory: as the child develops and constantly interacts with the world around him, knowledge is invented and reinvented. Child can learn from themselves and adults can help them to learn language.

Goal-oriented: adults give purpose of doing things and give direction to focus on for their goal.

Relevancy-oriented: adults want material related to the goals or purpose.

**Learning Acquisition as a Second Language**

As a second language, I’ve basically experienced studying English from middle school to college years with all the possible ways of learning in order to improve my skills and knowledge. In despite of the public school’s general educations of English class provided from middle to high schools, I remember studying at the desk with a number of various academic institutes, personal tutorials, group studying with educational television program in the private library during night hours, etc. as many of you had experienced as well. However, I have a unique experience of learning English than others have as I had actually gone studying in overseas during 4 years of college that many of you may still not obtain such experience I’ve had. Therefore, the paper will mostly be focused on what the difference between studying in domestic and international areas can be and how my English could effectively have improved based on my personal opinions.

Back in the 1980 or 1990’s, I believe that most students come to meet their first English as a second language when there were less outside English programs attracting young generations such as kindergarten kids or elementary students and we felt no need or pressure to start any earlier before middle school entry. As starting a target language for the very first time, we all needed some guideline, detail explanation or easy instruction where to start and what to do within our native language spoken by teachers. For instance, we started memorizing as many vocabularies as possible by looking up dictionary, pronouncing words as told, discovering fundamental grammar structures and repeating short dialogues of the situational conversation, by depending only the text books or few of related materials and question-and-answer examples relating to textbook which were provided by Korean speaking English teachers in general. I can assume that those progresses were mainly for preparing exams for school grades, not in purpose of practical way of learning. However, on the other hand, these kinds of procedures could have been better off approaching for students who are afraid of and have some difficult time of facing their second language like I felt at fist.

The time I first entered the college as freshman year, I’d finally realized that all my English educational knowledge and skills have been swept away after I participated in the general classes or communicated with few native English speakers in overseas. The 8 years of studying English in domestic schools had not given me any confidence or strength of myself that my hearing and speaking skills would be just enough to catch up all of my professional classes within other native-English-speaker students. In realty, I became very discouraged and ashamed of about the current situation I myself had to find out the efficient ways to improve my English for excellency and to study for good academic grades at the same time. In regardless of the self-respect, I started watching videos or reading books of the various well-known fairytale stories and also watching funny TV series based on everyday lives styles with English closed caption, from which I tried to understand the ways of communicating, pronouncing, moving gestures, face expressions or common sentences by repeating over and over until I could hear all conversations well and making sounds with my mouse until I am satisfied with. The next step I tried was creating as many friends as possible and using particular sentences or expressions what I’d learned from books, TV or videos with them. In that way I could’ve made few friends and received some chances of practicing myself for real. Within the next few years, I was able to catch up classes much faster and conveniently and communicate easily with other classmates better, and from those times, my personality was even changed from introspective to outgoing characteristics as discovered later.

Since the junior year had started, the classes were much more effectively involved with my major related classes which were business. For business majored classes, I realized there were many classes doing lots of group activities, presentation or discussion sessions in order to earn good grades. After the teacher provides an example of each day’s work, a group of the students may be actively interacted with each topic, decided who or what to do, and weren’t afraid of asking any questions during their preparation time. Of course, I was not used to any of those methods regardless understanding, speaking or writing English well since I was only used to what was told to do by teachers. As more experience doing such activities and practices were repeated I became relaxed, involved or even more enabled to try anything in the classrooms. As recognized, most of the classes I took for business major were similar that the teachers made students to talk more, bring their own ideas or thoughts, and even feel that they didn’t need teachers anymore for their discussions at the end of semester.

In conclusion, I may indicate that the direct method, grammar translation method or explainer of teaching style as I experienced during studying in domestic area can be easy for both teachers and students if the students are learning their second language as a beginner because there is no need to actively neither speak out nor present for strangers by using their second language. But, if the students are highly goal-oriented, then they must try to apply integrationist theory along their studies and the teacher must change their teaching styles to involver or enabler so that the students can learn more effectively and efficiently as well as the language will be lasting for a long time.

**Reference**

“Learning Teaching” book for a guidebook for English language teachers

By the author, Jim Scrivener (Second Edition: Macmillan books for teachers)

“Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching” book for teaching techniques in English as a second language

By the author, Diane Larsen-Freeman (Second Edition: Oxford)