**Introduction**

As English as a second language (ESL) has become a global language, the study of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), which is the study of how second languages are taught, has become significant (Gass & Selinker 2008, p.1).

In 2006, I went to Australia and studied at IELI (Intensive English Learning Institute). One unique feature at IELI is that students are placed in levels separately by skills area; reading, writing, istening and speaking. I remember I had a hard-marker and a strict teacher for my reading & writing class who only explained grammar and writing skills and ended the class with heaps of homework and empty brain. I learned a lot but the classroom atmosphere was not comfortable at all and my homework was full of red comments which were sad, so I was losing my confidence.

 In this paper, I analysed my second language learning experiences in TESOL module 1 and show how I plan to teach English in the future.

**Segregated-skill Instruction**

 IELI offers 3 classes: listening, reading & writing, and speaking. In other words, students learn English skills separately in three types of classes. It is said that the teaching programs are reflected in traditional ESL/EFL programs that provide classes concentrating on segregated language skills (Oxford 2001). Perhaps the IELI administrator may believe that learners cannot focus on more than one skill at a time and the segregated classes present instruction in terms of skill-linked learning strategies (Peregoy & Boyle 2001). However, Su (2007, p.28) stated that this common approach emphasizes skill orientation and rote memorization to pass an exam, but not practical use of the language.

A number of studies indicated that the integrated-skill approach can help learners not only develop their English skills but also consider English a real mean of interaction and sharing among people rather than just an object of academic interest (Oxford 2001). Su (2007, p.37) suggested that integrated-skills language program can be promoted through a wide variety of ways such as group discussion and preparing a group report.

**Teacher Types**

Each teacher has different teaching styles and Scrivener (2005, p.25) suggested teaching styles are classified into three categories: the explainer, the involver and the enabler. I believed my English teacher for reading & writing class was an ‘explainer’ as he rarely used activities, focused on skill sheets on grammar and vocabulary to improve accuracy. Although I worked hard, I was passive and discouraged when I ended up with low grades and negative feedback. I think that his teaching techniques: explaining and reading were not helpful as they have the lowest retention rates which mean that it is not effective.

My teacher did not seem to be aware of utilizing autonomous and self-motivated behaviour to help teaching, which is one of characteristics of adult learners. Hanak-Hammerl (2003, p.25) referred to the fact that autonomous learning is to ‘give learners the opportunity to take control of their own learning and determining the content and purpose of learning’. However, he did not make his students actively participate in his learning process though he provided a lot of valuable information but time consuming explanations. Lieb (1991) pointed out that teachers should act as a facilitator instead of offering facts in order to help themselves become motivated and fulfil a personal need.

Furthermore, he was prone to avoiding positive facial expressions that made students feel uncomfortable and increased the barriers involved in learning. The article (Ackgoz 2005, p.104) indicated that personality characteristics including warmth and enthusiasm lead to positive classroom climate and better student learning.

Lastly, his classroom is based on ‘traditional classrooms’ in which his students were given the lack opportunity of active participation but instead to be passive recipients. It is reported this method of traditional teaching is less effective to develop their language skills (Xiaoyan 2003, p.54)

**Future**

From my SLA experience, in the future, I do want to be a teacher who emphasizes interactive use of four language skills instead of linguistic forms. But rather I would understand learners’ barriers, motivate them, provide opportunities through classroom activities materials and give positive feedback that can boost their motivations. In addition, I try to create a positive classroom atmosphere so that they can feel safe and eventually learn better. According to Hanak-Hammerl (2003, p.62), I definitely believe that I have to ask myself the question not ‘how to teach’ but ‘how to learn?’ for the future classroom.

**Conclusion**

 With careful analysis, it is apparent that the integrated-skill programs, which integrate four language skills at once, can be more effective than the segregated-skill instruction IELI stresses. Furthermore, characteristics of teachers play an important role in the learning atmosphere as well as self-assuring students of their skills. In my experience, my teacher did not have expressive characteristics such as warmth and supportive but rather he was strict, a hard-marker, and a simple explainer. As a result, I failed to increase my interest in learning English, retain information from his class, and recognize the need for further information despite plenty of material he offered. Teachers should consider SLA a complex field and not just related to the study of language pedagogy.

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