My second language acquisition experience

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(Word count: 694)

As the world has become globally, many Koreans learn English as their second language in these days. Also I have been studying it since was 10 years old. I went to many English institutes and spent lots of money but I was not satisfied with this. Even though the certain teachers were hard working people, my English skills were not improved than I expected. I did not know the reason why those lectures were not effective. However, I met one teacher in Australia and my language skills improved dramatically. In this writing, I break down his teaching methology based on my understanding.

The teacher name was Simon. The students were all adults and Asian. So first, Simon respected personal differences for example, the students’ strange accent. He told me that do not try to fix my Korean accent. He thought accent was not a problem to learn any languages. He believed what we speak in English was important. And he recognized most of the students were shy in front of native speakers. So he made the class’s atmosphere friendly and these his efforts made students comfortable to participate in the class. And because of every student was adult, they had plenty experiences from their major or jobs. That is why our first presentation was related with our fields. After the presentation Simon asked us question and answer ourselves. Because adult learners are autonomous, the students were eager to participate Q&A time. I think Simon already knew all about the adult learners characteristics and applied in the class. This point was differ with other teachers I have met before. They treated the students as high school students so that the classes were teacher-centered. If they had considered the students characteristics, it would have been better class.

The class level was high intermediate and target area was business English. It means lecture or grammar class would not be helpful. So he gave us presentation assignment every day. The students prepared summary of a business article and submitted before their presentation. The students proceeded presentation without any material. Definitely, the presenter did not explained clearly so the audiences had many questions. It flowed to question and answer time naturally and all the students spoke in English spontaneously. The class environment was made as student-centered by themselves. In addition, I found “The Input Hypothesis” in this case. He pushed the students to read the English business article even if the content was not so familiar with them. I think this was Simon’s strong point. He did not instruct very much but all the students followed as he intended. I think this was the modern classroom. There were debate and plenty of group-work but rarely lecture.

I found his strong points that he was enabler but he was frequently involver style. Because the students were not fluent in English, it was difficult to communicate. Moreover, the topics were about business and economy. Most of the students were not majored in this area so they needed facilitator. He noticed that when he was needed to the students. So he had to cover all the business knowledge to support the students. He was not just a language teacher but also a business teacher. In addition he tried to emphasize the students’ circumstances even in their countries’ social problem as well. For instance, at that time there was huge amount of oil leaked in the west sea of Korea. It was my presentation subject and when I was talking about this, he felt frustration as Korean people. This kind of his effort caused that students were familiar with him.

Simon always tried to understand the students’ environments first. When I decided to become an English teacher, the goal was clear but the way was vague. After I finish this essay I can see the blueprint to be the best teacher. In conclusion, the important thing is that fully recognizing and understanding about the students. Then find a way how to teach them efficiently. What I am going to teach is also significant but if I do not know who the learner is, I may fail to my first big step of teaching.