TESOL 01:Second Language Acuisition Assignment

92th weekday class / Essay 1

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It’s been about more than nineteen years, I’ve been learning English as my second language. I started learning English when I was third grade in elementary school. The learning begins with extrinsic motivation. The motive of learning English as my second language has given by my parents, since the general preference of second language was English in Korea. English tuition teacher has chosen by my parents as well, and immediately the class has started as a small group with other four students which their English level of skill was beginner.

As I was a beginner, I communicated mostly through gestures and only could speak a few isolated words, also I didn’t know how to literate English.

The teacher taught me 4 language skills and tried balance all skills in one lesson which is speaking, writing, listening, reading with very basic level with students 3 senses.

 Other students and I drew pictures to learn vocabulary and alphabet, and we sang English song together which was for the visual and auditory. Also we did role play and put alphabet puzzle for the tactile sense. The teacher’s teaching methodology was ‘Involver’ rather than ‘Explainer’ and ‘Enabler’. She tried to involve the students actively and puts a great deal of effort in to finding appropriate and interesting activities such as sing an English song together or take a part in role playing.

 When I remind my schooling period from middle school until high school, the teacher’s teaching type was more likely being an explainer as the teacher relies mainly on ‘Explaining’ or ‘Lecturing’ as a way of conveying information to the students, and teaching methodology has more focused on receptive skills which is reading and writing. It was always mixed level classes grouping by ages, even though the student’s English levels were all different. All the students studied with same text book, learned about 5 English systems which is grammar, phonology, lexis, discourse and function. It was more teacher centered classes and the student’s participation was low.

 I faced many cases of students who lost interest of learning language easily, because of this one way interaction with the teacher, so that students tends to became more passive.

 Once I entered University, I decided to go abroad for experiencing different learning environment.

 I registered language school in Australia. The class was organized by student’s English level. There has beginner’s class for the students who functions with some difficulty in situations related to immediate needs, may have some simple oral communication abilities using basic learned phrases and sentences, and Pre-intermediate class for the students who can understands simple learned phrases easily and some new simple phrases containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly with frequent repetition. Next level of class was Intermediate and Upper Intermediate for the students who can speak with ease on most matters but still makes occasional errors in grammar or vocabulary which rarely inhibits communication.

 For Advance skilled students who has near native fluency with occasional errors in grammar or vocabulary was assigned to Advance class. Luckily I was assigned to Advance class and the environment was more likely modern. Teacher’s type was enabler which means that the teacher take a part in a class as a guide or a counselor.

 The students learned language skill with group activity and debate about language systems. The teaching methodology took longer time to get certain knowledge, but it has retained longer than study with ‘Explainer’ or ‘Involver’ type of teacher.

 Most of adult students were active and goal oriented, so they enrolled in a course for a reason and knew what goal they want to attain.

 Through my learning experience, and TESOL course, I could have learnt that learning environment is very important for the student. For my opinion ‘Involver’ and ‘Enabler’ type of teacher can motivate student better than ‘Explainer’ type of teacher. As involver or enabler type of teacher needs to give more chance to students for them to participate and lead the class by themselves, as using student’s 3 senses with trying to make balance teaching methodology. Particularly for the adults learner, giving motivation help themselves stimulate learning efficiency refer to Malcolm Knowles’s ‘Characteristics of adult learners theory’.