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My second learning language acquisition environment can be divided into 2 different periods. The first period is the one that I was taught at Korean classroom, which lasted from the age of 14 to 19. The second period is the one that I started to explore myself which has been lasted from the age of 20 to now.

At the age of 14, I faced the blue book called “SEONG MOON total English “for the first time. It was the English grammar bible. The title is written is written in Chinese Character and some of the explanation is also written in Chinese character and some Korean. Because of the boring look, it was good enough to scare me away from English. Teacher spent many hours for explaining the rules and making abbreviation form for grammar rules. Even some drills for memorizing grammar rules were repeated many times. Although I spent so many times in English, speaking or writing in English seemed to be something impossible. All I could manage somehow was just certain level of reading and listening that are mostly limited to textbook level. Notwithstanding all the problems I had, I even didn’t know it was very ineffective ways of acquiring second language. Since everyone in our school was very similar regarding the language proficiency. English was considered as one of the must subject that I should study.

At the age of 20, I faced the reality for the first time. As a genetic engineering major student, thick biology and chemistry book written in tiny English letters were my first agony to overcome. No teacher translating all the lines at university existed and panicked students made study group for conquering the hardships together. The methodology for study group was the same as the one that we had been used until high school. Students looked up the meanings in dictionary and wrote it down in Korean. Soon frustrated feeling was prevalent. But no one really knew what the real problem was. I was not intrinsically motivated at all in this situation. Following the class was getting easier as time goes by since somebody found the book translated as Korean version. But It became good opportunity to recall what went wrong in the past considering English acquisition.

I went to the library and tried to read as many as possible for the purpose of finding the language learning method that seemed suitable for me. According to the book “Never study English”, I stared to quit looking up the dictionary habit whenever I don’t know the meaning. Instead I trained my ear with tapes that are recorded with discussion group talking so many times. In the beginning it was really difficult to understand, the buzzing sound was continuously going around my ears that I often fell asleep in the middle of playing. No one pushed me for study but I was highly motivated for myself. After 3 months of training I could feel the difference, I didn’t look up the dictionary. However for some reason I could guess the meaning of the words from the context.

In 2002 at the age of 21 I decided to explore more and left to Vancouver, Canada. Liz was lovely Canadian grandmother who helped a lot for improving English. Since she didn’t know anything about Korea, I had to use only English to chat with her. Although I went to ESL school in Canada, I still think many of motivation came from Liz. She explained many things sometimes with gestures and actions which was so impressive that I couldn’t forget. We talked many things during watching news programs, cooking, preparing for the holiday events etc. I didn’t even fill like to study. I was just absorbed in the environments for 1 year.

Recalling from my experience, I strongly agree with the ideas that adult learners learn much better in environment with the intrinsic motivations are entailed. I still think if I persisted the former way for learning – grammar translation method I would still feel very scary about learning language. Hopefully English learning systems in Korean public school to be changed for the better that many students in Korea would be able to learn with less stressful environment.