**Experiences of learning second languages**

**Class : TESOL 135th WK**

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Until now I have only tried to learn English and Turkish as foreign languages. However my learning experience was different for both of them. I have started to learn English through mandatory English classes I had at kindergarten. I have had to take those courses unwillingly so I cannot say I was motivated. These classes were taught in a common jug&mug style by classic explainer type teachers. As an unmotivated student just willing to pass the class, this teaching method did not help me at all. As a fact I knew that when I went abroad after 14 years of English education I could hardly form a simple sentence to communicate with the locals. I was not expecting much more as our classes mainly consisted of TTT, teacher talking time, instead of STT, student talking time.

However my desperation at abroad somehow inspired me to learn more. So for a while I have studied by myself on my own pace. What I focused on at those times were more specific topics mostly related to my daily life. As I learned and used English at that period, I can easily say it worth more than those 14 years. I also realized at that time that my learning curve might be mostly dependent on my will and determination. As long as I am motivated, even a chalk&talk method can be useful.

During my undergraduate years I have experienced learning English from native speakers. I think that it is necessary to interact with native speakers to get a clearer idea of the language and to be able to speak in a modern manner instead of getting used to out dated forms. Also as I started to imitate the native speakers my pronunciation got much better with time with regard to my initial Korean accent. I think the most vital skill that one can learn from native speakers is the pace or the rhythm of speech. What I mean by that is that every language has a different pace as every language uses the different number of words to describe the same situation. So, in my opinion, when you get used to the pace of a language you start to think within that language and that is the first step towards the fluency.

Turkish, on the other hand, was not a life goal or a mandatory university lecture. It was just that my boyfriend happened to be a Turkish boy I felt the urge to learn his language. During my stay in Turkey I registered to a joint course of a university to learn Turkish. It was a condensed course and as other students never come it felt like a private lecture with only me and my teacher. My teacher was definitely involver where she let me learn most of the time and what she mainly did was just keeping an eye on me to check if I’m on the correct path. Even though I started learning Turkish by myself with determination, I have witnessed that nothing can be more efficient than a determined student combined with a good teacher in language learning. With correct methods a teacher can amplify a student’s potential quite dramatically and can turn language learning process into joy.

(539 words)