**What is Important for**

**Second Language Acquisition**

**TESOL CLASS: #140 WK**

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Almost every student in Korea has an opportunity to learn English. In my case, I was taught English ever since I was in the sixth grade. The only motivation for learning English was to get a good grade in middle school. A list of vocabulary to memorize was given in every class and I had to learn grammar thoroughly, which was not exciting at all for the sixth grade student. Luckily, I moved to Canada right after graduating middle school. As I spent eight years in Canada, I became more fluent in English without ‘studying’ English. Since I have experienced two totally different English education environments, I believe that the concepts learned in TESOL are related to second language environment for sure.

First, I agree that motivation is one of critical factors that affect the second language acquisition. As mentioned above, I started to learn English because of my external motivation required to get a good grade in tests. The external motivation was not strong enough to learn English in a broader scope. After I moved to Canada, however, I gained internal motivation that I wanted to make friends, having good times with them. I dropped by school library almost every day to do homework with friends and read many novels to study English by myself. My internal motivation was so strong that I learned much more vocabulary during my first year in Canada than I did in Korea during three years in middle school. Based on my experience, it would be really helpful if teachers could provide both external and internal motivation to students.

Second, considering multiple intelligences is also important skill for teachers. I was surprised at the variety of lesson plans prepared for ESL students in Canada. For example, I studied Hamlet not only by reading but also by acting and discussing with friends. Most of ‘intelligences’ were considered, including linguistic, logical, and kinesthetic intelligences. Thus, students were able to learn Hamlet in their own way. I am more of linguistic person rather than logical or kinesthetic. However, I was able to understand Hamlet more in depth by acting and discussing. Thus, I totally agree that consideration of multiple intelligences in lesson plan is crucial especially in large classes.

Lastly, effective English teaching depends on teaching style. In traditional classrooms, mostly receptive skills, which are reading and listening, were developed. This was the environment where I was taught grammar and vocabulary in middle school. Traditional way is effective in a way that students could learn materials quickly, but they could also lose interest and forgot the material quickly. In modern classrooms, however, teachers are facilitator, helping students to learn English. In my ESL class in high school, all of students started to be actively involved in group work once teach gave us a list of topics. Since I spent a whole week to prepare for my topic by searching books and making PowerPoint material, I learned a lot from those classes. Although the modern classroom environment requires more effort from students than the traditional classroom does, students can learn more by taking an active part in class.

I wish I would provide quality English class to my students like my ESL teachers did, by providing student with internal motivation, considering multiple intelligences, and having them take an active role in class. An effective teaching environment for second language acquisition would depend on various factors, meaning that there is no a single correct answer. However, it is required for teaching English that teachers know the concepts taught in TESOL and apply in class.

References:

Jim Scrivener (2010). Learning Teaching – The Essential Guide to English Language Teaching (3rd edition). MACMILLAN BOOKS FOR TEACHERS