Do you speak good English? How long have you studied English? English is taught as a second language in Korea. Korean who graduated high school, they learned it at least 6 years. However, they are afraid and hesitant to speak English and cannot even say “hello” even who has high score of TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication). Why Korean cannot speak it? how long should they learn and how much have to spend money for speaking fluent English? In my opinion, the main reason is in the educational environment focus on exams only. I am writing a second language environment that I experienced

When I was in junior high school, I learned English first time. The class had 5 to 6 hours a week. The teacher read and interpreted the book, and the students were very busy for taking notes. The teaching method was injection training, there was no integrated approach. There is an example of how students learned by rote;

Koreans answer “I am find, and you?” when someone asked “how are you?” Because this is the first dialogue they learned and memorized at first. I also remember that tried to memorize all words, phrase and bought translation book for test. English exam was not different with other subject. 10 listening questions and 20 to 30 reading questions. My childhood English environment was totally teacher-centered methods. Perhaps teacher-centered teachers can claim success in getting children through exams, but they cannot claim success in getting them to communicate or become self-motivated active learners of English. In these respects, the teacher-centered methods have clearly failed.

I learned from my experience that teacher-centered style was ineffective. Therefore, the class should become child-centered and the role of a teacher is to be “active helpers”. Teachers should encourage students to study on their own, and they should help with intrinsic motivation.

From a student’s point of view, the way I learned second language was “Behaviorist Approach”. Teacher controls behavior and learning process. Students are passive. Errors are not accepted. Success is reinforced by praise and rewards. Ineffective in this way is evidence by Koreans cannot speak English even after six years of study. In order to effectively learn a second language, a balanced learning plan of 4 language skills and an active student’s learning attitude are important. Furthermore, using various types of learning methods can develop the rate of retention. Thanks to research, the lecture which I used to be in the past shows a retention rate of 5% and the teaching others method shows a retention rate of 90%. Therefore, when learning a foreign language, should study not only reading but also teaching others.

To sum up, the second language environment and the way I have been learned is a totally failure. To learn a foreign language well need to make child-centered environment. Also, the teacher should keep research and study to increase the interest of learning language for students. Hope to all Korean can speak second language without any waste time and money.

Essay:

Describing a second language environment that you experienced as a child

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