My experience of second-language acquisition; was it a successful or a failure?

193th / Lily (Gayoung Rhi)

**Stephen Krashen** said that learning a second language can happen after a first language is already established. He suggested several theories to describe SLA.  
I personally believe that my L2 acquisition experience was successful. With Krashen’s **input and monitor hypothesis** points of view, I would like to share my three turning points of learning English, which finally made me acquire English.

It was my first time to meet English when I was 11. I had a private teacher. She built the strong **rapport** and I felt free to ask questions. She **assessed my language proficiency**. She applied the **input hypothesis**. She gave me comprehensible input which was one step beyond my level based on the assessment. I was a beginner. Since my **process of learning** was ignorance, she helped me focus on three **language skills**: listening, reading and speaking. I started learning alphabets with phonics and was asked to read words or short sentences aloud. My homework was listening tapes with repeating native speakers and recording my pronunciation in another tapes. The teacher tried to improve my **verbal-linguistic.** She was kind of **involver teacher** and had **effective teaching qualities**. She was good at making a balance T.T.T. and S.T.T. She considered my interests to prepare the reading materials for me. she had empathy to understand my learning difficulties. She was respectful waiting my learning progress and giving me many opportunities to communicate using English. Thanks to her, I established a **language system** well in the field of phonology, lexis and function.

When I was 14, I had a slump in learning English. The teachers were basically **explainers**. The classroom was too **traditional**. It was over crowded, the teaching was **teacher-centered**. They had the **mug and jug** approach. They kept lecturing, letting the students just read the textbook and having written exams individually. Students were developed as **rule formers** in learning English. They applied the **monitor hypothesis.** With focusing on the learning grammar rules and memorizing words, we have had the tendency to correct errors whenever using English. Although we could improve our accuracy, we were not fluent in speaking English. They mostly considered **visual and auditory learners.** It affected to have **low** **learning retention rates**. However, I believe that the mug and jug approach helped me have just the silent period of accumulating the knowledge of grammar and vocabularies. Because I think my knowledge of the grammar is mostly from this period. Thanks to this period, I also have become the self-awareness to correct my mistakes in using English.

Finally, when I was 18, I went to Philippines to study English. Due to the learning experiences from the country, I could get my confidence in using English. I was a foreign student in the Filipino classroom. The teachers had modern teaching style. Aside from me, there were different students from different countries, the teachers considered **individual learners’ differences** such as levels in various language systems and skills or cultural differences. They established the active **classroom dynamic.** The teachers surveyed our goals and interests of learning with questionnaires at the beginning of the school year. They reflected the results of survey in preparing learning activities. Teachers there were **enablers**. They made the students learn through having research projects, making a presentation about the topics with a group and writing a reflection paper with finding the connection between the lessons and learners’ **real life experiences.** The teachers let us experience adult learning process with **problem-based and collaborative learning approaches** like **Malcom Knowles’ theory, andragogy**. They helped us to be **data gatherers** and be **self-directed** in our own learning. With the active learning environment, I could have plenty of opportunities to practice English in the real life experiences by communicating with friends, teachers and maximizing the time using English practically. So I believe I have developed my **language system** in the field of **discourse** during this time.

In conclusion, as a future teacher, I think giving students lots of opportunities to practice their language is the effective and efficient way to help them to acquire the language based on my real life experiences. I will try to optimize learners’ setting inside my classroom and choose proper topics to help them the connection from their lesson to their real life experience. I hope my students will be well guided to be in the process of acquiring language instead of just studying language with my teaching and lesson.

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