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My experience of L2 Acquisition – a Success of Failure?

**Second Language Acquisition(SLA)** means developing a second language(L2) after the first language(L1) was established in the way we acquired L1. As this simple definition of SLA, My SLA acquisition was a success. Before I went to the Philippines, I could speak with one or two words and with few simple sentences such as “Hi. Nice to meet you.”, “How are you?”, and “Fine, thanks.” But after I spent three months, I could use conversational English with confidence. In this essay, I will discuss my experience at the time I started learning communicative English in the Philippines when I was at the age 21.

When I was 21 years old, I went to the Philippines to study English. I was eager to communicate in English, but I only had teachers who had lecture-centered classes that forced me to memorize books. By **Steven Krassen**, I had high motivation. I had a plan to go to Canada for working-holiday, so I needed to talk in English to get a job. In the Philippines, I was exposed in English environment, so I learnt English in an acquisition way. Teachers usually used easy words that I could understand. When I became familiar, they added new words. When I was explaining “How to sing”, I used “breath-in” and “breath-out” a lot. After I finished explaining, my teacher informed me “inhale” and “exhale” and corrected errors gently. They taught me step by step in an enjoyable class. Therefore I became a confident English speaker.

My teachers knew how to make good **rapport**. We sometimes went to have dinner and drink a beer so we could know each other well. According to **Effective Teaching Qualities**, They knew my interests and goals and were patient. When I went to buy mango, I couldn’t make a sentence asking the location of it. So, I had to find it using “Where, mango?” Later, I explained the situation in class with poor English however she tried to understand what I meant without judgement. Then she explained “Where can I find mango?” After I practiced the sentence, I learnt the phrase ‘Where can I find’. Teachers used knowledge of **Individual learner differences**. They knew I liked to use what I learnt and I wanted to learn practical English. So they focused on teaching real life communication. That was why we could have **classroom dynamic**.

According to **Four Learners Modes** and **Multiple Intelligence Theory**, when teachers include the four styles of learner modes and multiple intelligences in their class, it can maximize students’ potential to learn. When I took classes in the Philippines, I watched animations with one of the teachers. Because my English level was so low, watching animations and practicing the lines were very helpful to use in actual life immediately. When we first watched, we didn’t use subtitles. When I listened to some chunks of the sounds, I mimicked it even though I didn’t understand the meaning. And then, we read subtitles to understand it. Also we roleplayed with the lines we learnt. Studying with animation aroused my interest to keep studying English.

My teachers were involvers and enablers by **Three Teacher Types**. Because we had one to one classes, a teacher was my teacher and partner. Sometimes, we had outdoor-classes. I had missions such as finding a bakery and negotiating a price. Before we went out, the teacher taught me several expressions I could use. After that, I had to complete the mission alone. Only when I had difficulties, I could ask my teacher how to talk in the situation. After I completed the mission, we talked about the expressions and vocabularies I learnt through the mission. The classes were a modern classroom setting by **Traditional vs. Modern Teaching**, and I was data-gatherer by **Types of learners**. I could easily remember the expressions and vocabularies. By **Learner Retention Rates**, the retention rate was high because mainly I learnt by doing.

I could accomplish L2 acquisition successfully through the experience from the Philippines. I could speak English without fear and hesitation thanks to exposure to English in a positive environment. A positive environment can help students acquire L2. Students can enhance their motivation and self-esteem, and reduce anxiety with good rapport, a respectful teacher who cares about their students in an active class setting. Through my experience, I am determined to be a teacher who tries to make good rapport, understand students, use effective teaching methods, and keep studying and thinking how to boost students’ potential to learn.

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