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Essay Topic: My Experience of L2 Acquisition – a Success or Not?

From the time I learned English as my second language (L2) I acquired and studied English. Second language acquisition means naturally developing a second language after the first language has been established while studying language is a typical traditional way of teaching and learning style. When I was five years old, I went to an English academy to learn a second language. Teachers there told me to speak only in English and I played with my friends in English. So, I could naturally acquire English. But from elementary school to high school also in Korea, I had studied English and did not acquired it. However, I went to college in the United States. I understood what language acquisition was.

First of all, my first L2 acquisition experience was successful because it was based on **Modern Teaching instead of Traditional Teaching**. At the academy I went to when I was five, I had to use only English during class time. They had active desk arrangements. I could easily talk to friends in the classroom because we were facing each other. The students were able to learn from experience from diverse class materials too. This shows **Three Learner Modes** are effective in teaching. Teachers put a lot of images and taught the kids how to say the name of the pictures in English. Also, they taught us English songs so we could naturally learn how to count numbers in English. Not only that, I acquired English through role-playing which is kinesthetic learner mode.

On the other hand, from elementary school to high school, I did not acquire English. For that twelve years, learning English was more closed to studying for me. The schools I went to had typical traditional classrooms. This affected establishing bad **Rapport**. Teachers were shouting when students’ answers were wrong, and they only gave attention to students with good grades. If the teachers understood **Individual Learner Differences**, the students could learn English more effectively. Every student’s ability to remember things is different and the previous learning experiences of each student are various.

In addition, coming from my personal experience of English learning, good and bad rapport is related to **Effective Teaching Qualities**. The teachers in my middle school were disrespectful to the students. They usually ignored students who could not quickly understand class materials. For me, I felt the teachers were not enthusiastic about teaching. According to **Three Teacher Types**, they were explainers. The teachers usually just read textbooks during the class and they had been teaching the same way for decades. The teachers were the only speaker in the class, so our talk time is low. If the students talked in class including asking questions to classmates, we used to get a warning and lost some points from the final grade.

Also, I did not have enough chance to acquired English from elementary school to high school because teachers did not use full **Language Skills and Systems**. They only focused on teaching grammar and lexis. I could easily solve reading and listening tasks but speaking was the most difficult for me even though speaking is one of the most important skills in language and the first thing to be acquired.

However, when I went to college in America, I could successfully acquire English. I learned much more during the five years in the States than studying English in Korea for the last twelve years. It was because **Multiple Intelligence Theory** was adopted. Since I went to pastry school, I watched the chef instructor’s demonstration and followed the steps the way they did. In the class, I used not only visual, kinesthetic ways but also an interpersonal way to acquire English during the group project. I never forget the kitchen terms I learned at that time. According to **Malcolm Knowles**, Adults have 6 characteristics of learning. I was very motivated because learning how to bake pastry items was very interesting. Also, since I was the only international student in the class, every classmate was nice, and they were willing to help me. I had a goal to finish school successfully, so I practiced English what I had learned during the day. My English got better by graduating the school.

To sum up, I had time that I studied English just by sitting at the desk and read textbooks. However, I have acquired English naturally by living and working in America.

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