Second Language Acquisition Assignment

Student Name : Kang Seulki

Professor Name : David Mcgill

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Kang Seulki

(David Mcgill Class)

Introduction

In Korea, we have plenty of institutions and private tuition to study English which is one of most important subjects for all students and also for adults who want to make good careers. In my generation, we have been spending quite a lot of time for acquiring English language since you were young but we have still got to struggle to get effective ways of studying English. At this point, I’d like to look back how I studied English as a second language to figure what types of classrooms or environment I was in and what kind of instructors I had so that be able to apply an effective way to my future students.

1.

There are many English academies for preschool children nowadays but when I was an elementary school student, there are some of students who did not even know Korean characters in first grade. It means that children are learning a second language even before they do not know Korean perfectly which is their first language. However, this early education could bring pretty much of positive effectiveness. In my case, when I was in the elementary school, there was not the subject of English at school so I used to attend several institutions for English which native English teachers usually thought little children in the modern type of classrooms. I could clearly make a comparison between those institutions and the public elementary school that I attended at that time. At first, as long as we were so young to study ourselves seriously, we wanted to have fun all the time with foreign teachers who were quite interesting to us with all different appearances and different language that they used. Especially because they brought a fun and joyful stuff each time for activities. Even though all those fun stuff such as picture cards and board games were the one of process for acquiring a language, it was not studying time for me but play times due to freer and more active environment that teacher made. The teachers tried to ask students about the answers or opinions they were thinking in comfortable and friendly way no matter what students said wrong answers or mumbled. That was a real contrast to public school teachers who always tend to correct and focus on errors we have made.

Secondly, we were at most around 10 people in a classroom unlike public school classrooms with at least 40 students so teachers were able to care about children individually. Due to the fact that we were young little children who normally tried to attract adults’ attention, the teacher’s personal affection toward students brought the progress of learning speed and lots of motivation.

In this case of teaching, we can call the type of teaching “involver”. We definitely needed directions or strong orders from instructors because we could have been out of control sometimes but also entertainment such as telling stories and jokes at ease. So I think that the modern classroom environment and involver type of teachers who could perform “entertainer teaching” could be proper for children.

2.

My second learning English experience is from the time I was in public middle and high schools with typical traditional classroom environment. Honestly, we did not have enough time for learning English as a second language with appropriate steps of acquiring a language as we learnt our first language. We had to be busy to study contents that would be on written tests so naturally we and our teachers would focus on language skills of reading and writing. We did some of listening practice but speaking. When it comes to learning languages, I would say that is also learning about cultures and history. If we want to know about a certain language, we should learn about their country, either. I think this goes through with communication. For communication, the most important skills can be listening and speaking. We can acquire essential information and great worth about a certain language by conversation with natives who have originality.

For that matter, my second experience was sort of lack of truth about learning a language. I cannot deny that I learnt many of grammar rules and vocabulary in that period but when I first tried speaking English, it just interrupted my worlds to organize in correct order. All the grammar things made me think in mind for a while to put the vocabulary in right order before I said about something even if it was a just small thing.

3.

Finally, I went to study abroad to Canada. It was not a long time but I could learn English from professional native English teachers in native environment. In classrooms, we all were adults and willing to study hard with lots of passion and motivation so instructors were able to be “enablers”. It was possible to make decisions that might be shared and negotiated in the classroom. The teachers absolutely could control the learners easily without so many worlds due to the fact that we were mostly responsible grown-ups who respected teachers.

In that period, my new vocabulary was the terms that children might not understand such as technical terms and slangs. This kind of instruction could go on because those are acceptable to adult learners and nobody makes a fun of slang outrageously to each other. As we can see characteristics of adult learners, we can discuss about certain topics with sharing expert experience or personal events. In this case, teachers do not have to be only instructor but one of learners.

Conclusion

According to my personal experience of language learning, I think that there is a time and place to apply concepts of teaching by learners’ age and environment. For myself, I truly enjoyed the time in institutions with foreign teachers when I was little. I would be an entertainer and involver in modern type of classroom if I teach children as I thought I learnt many unforgettable words and concepts in effective way at that time. And if I teach juveniles, I would not have classes that I have done at school. I will give learners more opportunities to speak out and express their individual opinions so that they can communicate in English with native people about true meaning of learning a second language. Lastly if I have a chance to lead adult classes, I would keep characteristics of adult learners in mind and try to give information as much as I could and learn from them either. That can be the way of respecting adult learners.

 It was valuable time to look back all of my experience of learning English cause from now on, I can set up and make a plan how to treat learners and what kind of method of atmosphere I should design.