

## HELPING DIFFERENT TYPE OF LEARNERS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPEAKING SKILL DEVELOPMENT (ENL 1004) COURSE AND ENHANCING THE SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (ENGLISH) AT PANYAPIWAT INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT (PIM)

การช่วยเหลือผู้เรียนที่มีความแตกต่างกันในรายวิชาการพัฒนาทักษะการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ (ENL 1004) และมีความเกี่ยวเนื่องถึงการรับรู้ภาษาที่สอง (ภาษาอังกฤษ) ของสถาบันการจัดการปัญญาภิวัฒน์

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### Abstract

This article aims to propose some related learning and teaching theories and to share experiences in applying the English language teaching, as well as to present seven types of learners who have different attitude in learning English. Normally, the English teachers might not remind themselves in which the learners also have different attitude when they learned English. Some of them pay more attention to learn but most of them seem to be fort to learn. According to the learners at Panyapiwat Institute of Management (PIM), they had to learn English for Communication (GE 1002 to 1005) in the past. At present, the English subjects are also changed into English Speaking Skill Development (ENL 1001 to 1004 RT it is concerned with English for Convenient Store 7-11 and Non RT, it is concerned with general Business English such as Food Business (FB), Logistic (LG), etc. For the teaching situation, the writer has taught English Speaking Skill Development (ENL 1004, RT and Non RT), it is known that there are different types of learners. To their English learning attitude, the situation provides them to have different behavior of how to acquire English and they also have different attitude to learn. Hence, the English teachers should realize about teaching theories in order to help their learners acquire second language (L2), particularly English language acquisition, and how to apply learning theories to English Speaking Skill Development course at Panyapiwat Institute of Management (PIM). Therefore, the teachers enable to apply those learning theories for developing their teaching in the future and it enables change the learners' attitude in learning English.

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**Keywords:** Learning and Teaching Theories, Types of learners, First and Second Language Acquisition, Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), English Speaking Skill Development Course (RT) and (Non RT), Learning Attitude

## บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อนำเสนอความรู้เกี่ยวกับทฤษฎีการเรียนการสอนและการนำเสนอประสบการณ์ในการประยุกต์เพื่อการสอนภาษาอังกฤษและการนำเสนอถึงความแตกต่างของผู้เรียนภาษาทั้งเจ็ดลักษณะที่มีความแตกต่างกันในการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษ โดยทั่วไปแล้วอาจารย์ผู้สอนภาษาอังกฤษอาจจะไม่มีการย้ำกับตัวเองว่าผู้เรียนนั้นมีความแตกต่างกันในด้านพฤติกรรมการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษ ซึ่งผู้เรียนบางคนนั้นมีความตั้งใจแต่ส่วนมากแล้วดูเหมือนจะเป็นการถูกบังคับต่อการเรียนรู้ โดยการกล่าวถึงนักศึกษาของสถาบันการจัดการปัญญาภิวัฒน์ซึ่งในอดีตเขาจะต้องเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในวิชาภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการสื่อสาร (GE 1002 ถึง GE 1005) แต่ในปัจจุบันได้เปลี่ยนเป็นวิชาการพัฒนาทักษะการพัฒนารูปการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ (ENL 1004, RT ซึ่งเกี่ยวข้องกับภาษาอังกฤษในร้านสะดวกซื้อ เซเว่นอีเลฟเว่น และ Non RT ซึ่งเกี่ยวข้องกับภาษาอังกฤษธุรกิจทั่วไปเช่น ธุรกิจอาหาร, โลจิสติกส์ อื่นๆ เป็นต้น) ซึ่งในสถานการณ์การสอนของผู้เขียนบทความได้สอนในวิชาทักษะการพัฒนารูปการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ โดยที่ผู้เขียนเองรู้ถึงความแตกต่างของผู้เรียน พฤติกรรมการเรียนจะนำไปสู่ความแตกต่างของการรับรู้ภาษาของผู้เรียน ดังนั้น ผู้สอนจึงควรตระหนักถึงทฤษฎีการเรียนการสอนเพื่อที่จะช่วยผู้เรียนในการรับรู้ภาษาที่สองโดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษและการนำไปประยุกต์กับการเรียนในรายวิชาการพัฒนาทักษะการพูดภาษาอังกฤษของสถาบันการจัดการปัญญาภิวัฒน์ ดังนั้น อาจารย์ผู้สอนจึงควรที่จะสามารถประยุกต์ทฤษฎีการเรียนรู้ในอนาคตต่อไป เพื่อที่จะทำให้ผู้เรียนมีการเปลี่ยนแปลงพฤติกรรมการเรียนไปในเชิงบวก

**คำสำคัญ:** ทฤษฎีการเรียนการสอน ผู้เรียนเจ็ดรูปแบบ การรับรู้ภาษาที่หนึ่ง และภาษาที่สอง พื้นที่ในการพัฒนาเชิงประชิด รายวิชาการพัฒนาทักษะการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ (RT) และ (Non RT) ทศนคติการเรียนรู้

## Introduction

With reference to the writer's English teaching experience, most teachers might not remind themselves about learning and teaching theories and the students' learning attitude. Therefore, it is interesting to remind those who teach English in every level to observe the learners/students' attitude so that the teachers can apply their teaching strategies suitably. According to learning attitude, it is interesting to help the learners in acquiring second language

(L2) which is concerned with English language acquisition. Additionally, it is focused on the use of learning theories applied with the learners at Panyapiwat Institute of Management (PIM) to English Speaking Skill Development (ENL 1004) course so that it enables the teachers apply those learning theories for developing their teaching. First of all, the writer also reviews learning and teaching theories in order to understand characteristics and benefit of each type of theory as follows.

## Learning and Teaching Theories

### Behaviorisms

According to Skinner (1957), Behaviorism is an approach which has derived from a foundation of positivism theory. This approach rises the idea of learning theory that is explained as some forms of conditioning. It is concerned with Stimulus-Response Theory (S-R) or it is called “Classical Conditioning” that is based on studies of animal learning in laboratory setting. Consequently, behaviorism is adapted to use with human language learning. Skinner (1957) continued that behaviorist theory explains learning in terms of “operant conditioning” which is individual responds to stimulus by behaving in a particular way. This means, the learners will response differently, if they are stimulated by different reinforcements, there are two ways as increasing and decreasing. “Increasing”, the learners will tend to persist with the behaviour when the environment is rewarding. In contrast, if the environment is unrewarding, the learners will pursue a different course of action as “Decreasing”. Therefore, we can say that learning is the result of environments rather than genetic factors. Thus, it is seen that behaviorism emphasizes on what the human does but it does not emphasize on what they think or feel as the content of mind. In the same way, it might say that behaviourism is the kind of psychology which is the science of behaviour, it is not the science of mind (Williams and Burden 1997). According to this concept, it is applied in language teaching and learning by using the audio-lingual approach.

The teacher leads the learners to repeat their sentences by using pattern drills, memorization of dialogues, chorus and group repetition or substitution drills. It emphasizes on the correct responses, but it does not allow for learning from mistake.

### Cognitive Theory

Williams and Burden (1997) claimed that cognitive psychology is considered as contrast to behaviourism as the way in which the human mind thinks and learns. Moreover, it is seen as the science of mental life which is included and expected as how people build memories and the way that they are involved in the information processing, intelligence & intelligence testing and constructivism; it is mainly concerned with the way to make sense of the world individually. Information processing is an approach to cognitive psychology and it is an approach to provide valuable insights of working of the human minds. Furthermore, it is concerned with the way that the learners take in the information to process and to act with learning (Atkinson and Shiffrin 1968) and (Schank and Abelson 1977). This mean, the learners’ input of the information come from environment, perception and store in memory. Additionally, their attention is a factor that can be used in the area of information processing. It is explained that attention is a cognitive resource to stimulate learners’ concentration of learning because their attention lead them to focus on their interesting such as the selected tasks. Therefore, it is useful for individual learners

to select what they demand in learning tasks.

According to memory, it is an area of information processing which is an aid of cognitive psychology. It is the components seem to be a sensory memory that is described as the learners record information for a brief amount of time before passing into short-term memory because working memory is used in which the learners pay attention to information in particular time. Then, if the information is rehearsal to them many times, the information is passed into long-term memory. This theory can be applied in language teaching and learning when the learners have problem to remember vocabulary, the teachers can use rehearsal to help the learners to construct vocabulary. Another importance concerning with cognitive psychology is "Intelligence and intelligence testing", intelligence is not only meant some form of inborn, general ability to learn or ability to stream and to succeed in school but also it is concerned with the learners' ability to use culture background to learn (Williams and Burden 1997). With reference to Intelligence, which the learners display in everyday lives; it happened from they have action with given situation. Intelligence which is measured by IQ tests. It is necessary to test learners' language proficiency for knowing their language background and level that can help learners to be successful in learning language.

### **Constructivism**

It is helpful for information processing

which is still underline of cognitive approach. To understand it, there are three suggestions from Piaget, Bruner and Kelly (1997). According to Piaget (1997), Constructivism is not traditional view of learning but it is emphasized on constructive nature of the learning process. It means that the learners' own personal understanding, sense of the world; personal meaning from their experiences and what surround them. He continued to confirm that learning is action-based and it is more concerned with the process of learning that what is learned. Moreover, the importance of learning should not teach learners to the rules of language but should provide experiences in the target language which are related to aspect of the learners' own world by giving balance between which is known and what is being experienced. They are viewed as the process of assimilation and accommodation.

Bruner (1997) supported Piaget' idea by saying that cognitive psychology is a discovery approach to learning. Furthermore, development of conceptual understanding, cognitive skill and strategies is the aim of learning rather than acquisition of information. The learners should be learned and remembered from what they had learned to discover the principle by doing tasks and learning by mistake or error. Thus, this concept of Bruner's view is used in language class by designing the task so that the learners enable to learn the target language and develop their abilities on the language. Besides, Kelly (1997), he mentioned that man as scientist, the people will construct knowledge from their

own personal experiments and make their own sense of information surround them or previous experiences. It is called “personal construct theory.” By adapting into language learning, it is not taught the learners to learn language rules but the learners will make sense and create their understanding of the world of language from environment or surrounding.

### Humanistic Approach

Humanistic Approach theory emphasizes on the importance of the learners’ inner world and individual’s thoughts, feeling and emotion of human development (William and Burden 1997). This theory is mentioned by Erikson, Maslow and Rogers (1997). Erikson (1997) viewed that human development depends on the way in which individual learners were determined and challenged by society in early stage at particular time of their lives. At early stage, if the parents or those who take care children and helped them to be able to learn to trust as well as helped them to establish a basic attitude what they can do, this basic sense will be their internalization.

Erikson (1997) gave further explanation that it is a sense of industry which is a basic educational skill and learning. This theory is involved in teaching the target language for young learners and their teachers should not lead them fail in their learning. Importantly, the teachers should emphasize on individualized or co-operative learning rather than competition in order to protect the learners to compare

with those who can learn better than him or her. Maslow (1997) suggested that a hierarchy of human needs by presenting in the shape of a pyramid. His meeting basic needs are based on a basic concept of human resources and organizational behavior. He categorized needs into deficiency needs (also known as D-needs) and growth needs (also known as being needs). The deficiency needs are biological balance such as people need food, water, the absence of illness, security, belonging and self-esteem. Growth needs are related to the fulfillment of individual potentials which are cognitive and aesthetic needs, and self-actualization. It means that the people/learners want to reach basic needs while growth needs will stem from a desire to grow as a person. If we apply into teaching and learning process, it means that we should help learners realize their full potential to achieve their self-actualization, and the teachers should recognize that learners may not being met basic needs at their home or school. Therefore, they should encourage learners to think and help them build up their self-respect. Their tasks should be challenging and creativity before they move to help learners reach their higher needs. Rogers (1997) added that human beings have a natural potential for learning and learning take place when the subjects are personal relevance to learners. According to Rogers’ concept, teachers should treat see the learners as clients because learners have their own needs to learn and it is easy to make relationship between teachers and learners.

## Social Interaction

Williams and Burden (1997) claimed that this theory might say that children or learners were born in social world and they learn language for interaction with other people in everyday lives. This theory refers to the use of communicative approach which is involved in language teaching because the learners learn the target language by using language for communication. Vygotsky and Feuerstein (1997) suggested that to adapt in language learning, the learning tasks should not just learning speech, but they should be presented as meaningful communication. Furthermore, the learning should be lied in the nature of the social interaction between two or more people such as the teachers with their pairs. According to Feuerstein, he beliefs that the learners can become to be effective learners by developing their cognitive capacities throughout their lives. Therefore, the key figures that are in the social interaction will be the central element of learning. His view also supports Vygotsky and Feuerstein (1997) learning languages teaching service such as the teacher should provide task for their learners to response and interact with them. Moreover, the teachers should be aware of the social interaction that is composed of four key factors of learning process, in a social constructive model namely: teachers, learners, tasks and contexts. According to Williams and Burden (1997), “the teachers select the tasks to reflect their beliefs in teaching and learning. The learners interpret the tasks that are meaningful and personal to them individually. The task is

therefore interface between the teachers and learners. To this situation, teachers and learners also interact with each other.”

## The application theories of learning for helping learners reach their zone of proximal development (ZPD)

First of all the writer would like to express his personal view that every learning theory in the previous view involves my English language learning experiences. For example, since he was a language beginner, he was taught by using pattern drill in chorus and group repetition which was an audio-lingual approach. In this approach, he had a chance to remember vocabulary and sentence structures. With reference to learning theory, the memory occurred by rehearsal. Then, when he learned higher level, information processing influences occurred, because he had to use many sources to interact with the tasks. In addition, the writer was tested language as how he was succeeded in learning as intelligence, as well as intelligence testing are used. When he kept learning language, constructivism was the part of my learning, because the writer had to absorb the concept understanding of the knowledge by focusing on how to learn, how to do the tasks and use my own knowledge to involve with my learning. All previous experiences were important factors that contributed to understand the new knowledge. It is not only a humanistic approach but also a social interactionism for my learning life.

Furthermore, in a higher level, his specific needs occurred as a client that he needed to

learn English used in my work and communication accurately, fluently and appropriately. Therefore, the beliefs about learning and the learners, the application of theories to learn the target language (English) depends on situation in language class, level of learners and different types of learners.

Therefore, a teacher, should consider what objectives of learning and the learners' expectations such as the need of learn to passing the exams, the target language preparation in real lives. In the writer's opinion, the teachers should be aware of the needs of learners and the learning is for and how much they want to learn. From the beliefs about learning, there are different characteristics, and types of learners in language class. Therefore, it is difficult for providing the tasks to the learners in the same class. Thus, as a teacher, he also applies theories of learning to help learners and my students to reach their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

According to Vygotsky (1978), ZPD is seen as the skill or knowledge which is just beyond the abilities of learners to do and to succeed learning or tasks by themselves or without helping from the teachers. The teachers should act as the facilitators for supporting learners. However, the facilitators should do the main works of teachers. Firstly, they should know the learners' needs, ability and background knowledge. Secondly, they should select activity that is suitable for learners. Thirdly, they should give instructional support that is called scaffolding; it is seen as the assistance or helper who allows the learners complete their

tasks by themselves, questioning, adapting materials and etc.

We often meet many learners who have different attitude and there are various types of learners. Thus, the teachers should know the type of learners they are. In addition, teachers should help them to be successful in language learning. With reference to the teachers' belief about learners who are categorized into seven types namely resisters, receptacles, raw material, clients, partners, individual and democratic explorers (Meighan and Meighan 1990). Hence, it depends on the teachers as reflective practitioners and their responsibility to consider the way to support them to reach the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). It is defined as the area where the learners can reach and achieve when the teachers help them to become master in language learning.

In order to help the learners to reach ZPD, the teachers have to realize in that their learners have different characteristics, so the teachers cannot use the same solution or technique with them. According to Williams and Burden (1997), there are various types of language learners in the same class. Hence, it is difficult to help by separating all of them individually. However, it is interesting in identifying to know types of learners and sharing the solution to help them in learning language (English language) in classroom. To understand the different types of learners, I would like to categorize them into seven types (Williams and Burden 1997) and propose the techniques how to help them in English language learning.



## The Different Types of Learners

According to the course of English Speaking Skill Development (ENL 1004), he would like to apply the learning theories to meet each type of learners/students at Panyapiwat Institute of Management (PIM) as the followings.

The first type of learners is the resister learners. For example, English course is an optional subject which the learners have to learn according to the syllabus. They may fail English due to their negative attitude in the past. In addition, the learners might think that they cannot be successful in learning English. Therefore, their negative experiences affected them to resist in learning language in their classroom and they may anti the subject. In order to help the resister learners, the theory of behaviorism will be applied to my teaching in the language classroom. Firstly, he provided easy exercise such as the pattern drill or easy dialogue active which is a good chance for PIM students because there are native teachers who teach them in English class. According to their learning, the theory of behaviorism is automatically used in teaching. The students have opportunities practice pattern drill and speak dialogue with their friends and teachers. Furthermore, when he taught the students, he asked them to revise what they learned and asked them to repeat again in plenary. Then, he provided the other dialogue exercises concerning with the lesson to show on presentation and asked the students to fill out the missing sentences. When they finished their exercise, he asked them to read the dialogue

in plenary. To the activity, the writer did not blame his students when they made mistake so that they also felt safe as well as he did not avoid to offer them reward by saying “good”, “you have done well.”, “good work” so that the students felt warm in learning. The activity helps them have self confidence in learning English. Furthermore, teachers should be good listeners when the students talk about their problems in learning. Additionally, he always explains my students to understand the important of English language in their lives that make them increase their interest in English language by setting a simple task that the learners can do it easily, and support them to change their attitude in learning. Additionally, I usually give learners reward as positive feedback in order to reinforce them to learn that change their attitude in learning English.

The second type of learners is seen as receptacles. These learners are metaphorically related to the jugs and mugs. Thus, the learners/students need their teachers to pour water (knowledge) to them, this means, the learners receive knowledge from teacher. In teaching, the teachers should prepare the tasks, that are suitable for the learners’ level. Furthermore, the teachers should provide learning tasks which are challenging for the learners’ thinking. In addition, the teacher can use an inductive approach to teach the learners such as show example and then teach them the rules. For example, teachers show the words “write, wrote and writing.” Then, the teachers can lead the learners to talk/share ideas in pair or they may



ask the learners “Do we ever use these words?” or “When do we use these words?” so that the learners interact with friends and then the teacher may lead the learners to share idea in plenary. Then, the teachers explain learners to understand clearly in which how to use these words. Moreover, the teachers can teach them the rules or make the sentences. Additionally, the teachers assign the learners to practice making sentences by using three words above so that they can apply the rules which they have learnt in order to construct their own knowledge.

According to the writer’s teaching ENL 1004, his course book is concerned with Non RT; this course is general business and it is not concerned with Retail. The lesson is concerned with the meeting and he taught them about “Conditional Sentence” (If course), so he lead students to watch a sound track movie and allow them to see subtitles English. The subtitles provide the students to learn the conditional sentences and he stopped the movie and asked them to write those sentences. Then, he led the students to learn and explain them the rule of conditional sentences. Moreover, he asked students to do exercise by revising the students to think about the situation in the movie. It is an inductive approach activity which is suitable for the receptacle learners.

For the third conception of learners as raw material, Williams and Burden (1997:59) said “they are like the clay to be moulded into fine work of art or building material to be constructed into a solid and well-designed

building.” They wait the teachers to teach them in language. In addition, the learners/students will have interaction with teachers, if the teachers force them to learn. To the activity provided, the teachers may teach the learners to the language point.

With reference to teaching in class, the writer taught the students vocabularies by showing the words “walking and walked”, “interesting and interested” and explained them the usage of words. Then, he selects some related exercises from the internet that help them practice in pair works. In teaching English conversation, he showed the example of dialogue on the board and he taught them to make another dialogues in the similar situation. In addition, he suggested the students when they have learning problems. Furthermore, he also was a facilitator to support his students to achieve their study.

Furthermore, exercises should be suitable for learners’ level although sometimes the learners are bored when they only do exercise in textbooks, so teachers should change activity by leading their learners to make sentences about the words with friends or pair works. For this activity, they have a chance to communicate together and write on the board. Then, teachers can suggest learners when they make mistakes. After they do exercises, teachers should reinforce the learners/students by giving positive feedback when they do well so that the learners/students have motivation to learn.

The fourth type of learners is as treated clients. It is seen that the relationship between teachers and learners seem to be metaphori-

cally related to the sellers and customers. Therefore, the learners think that, if they buy product or service, they must be satisfied with it. Moreover, these learners know what they want to learn and they are already to learn. To this view, the teachers should care of what the learners need in learning English language classroom so the teachers should lead their learners to learn. To this, he applied by relating to those who are going to graduate and find the jobs, so he thought and predicted that his students want to learn writing application letter for applying a job. This case, he taught the students about the use of language how to write the letter. Moreover, the students were assigned them the task to write letter to apply for jobs. In addition, teachers should help/explain their students to understand the tasks, if they need suggestion (scaffolding) (William and burden 1997).

According to my course book ENL 1004, Non RT, a lesson is concerned with jobs interview so the students in the course need to learn writing resume and application letter. Thus, the tasks should concern with real world that the students are involved because they are motivated to learn, assimilate and accommodate their existing knowledge with what they learn. Furthermore, the tasks should provide the students understand what they learn clearly as well as the students are able to build up their own knowledge and be able to apply it into their real lives. Additionally, the writer provided a variety of activities to maintain students' motivation which is cooperative

learning atmosphere can be put in class so that they have interact with their friends and help to each others.

The fifth type of learners are "partners", they act with their teachers as friends and they share ideas with teachers. According to Williams and Burden (1997), "humanism has a number of messages for the language teachers such as to create a sense of belonging, encourage creativity, allow for choice, minimize criticism, encourage self-initiation and evaluation." By creating an activity, the teachers can give the choices of activities and let the learners select the activities, that they feel interested.

According to the writer's project for students in the course ENL 1004, Non RT, the students were asked to act as a Master of TV program, the writer allowed them to vote their acting and program by providing the choices of role play namely guide, news reporter, staff of the hotel, resort or restaurant. Then, they do the project by following the instruction and chose their act by themselves in plenary and recorded into CD.

This project encourages the students to criticize by giving the reasons then the writer encouraged them to discuss/share ideas with friends about their roles in class. Furthermore, he shared idea with my students. If the students have problems, he suggested the solution to solve their problems.

The sixth type of learners is the individual explorers, or individual learners who have motivation and curiosity to learn. The teachers' roles are acting as facilitators and guide learners

how to learn but not what to learn (Williams and Burden (1997). In order to support them to reach the Zone of Proximal development, the writer set a challenging task for my students to find the information individually in learning “English Speaking Development course” (ENL 1004, Non RT), The students have to find the information which is relevant with their learning topic in order to give a chance for learners to learn by themselves. In this activity, he assigned students to find information about job application and how to write resume and application letter. They enable construct/explore knowledge in learning by themselves and they share their information in classroom.

The individual learners can share some characteristics with the learners as democratic explorers in which they have motivation and curiosity to learn. The democratic explorers like to work in group or cooperate with their friends. Moreover, they can set their own agenda, decide the particular knowledge by the group and they have freedom to decide how they wish to work (Williams and Burden 1997). Therefore, the teachers’ roles can only be facilitators for the learners as well.

According to the social interactionism theory, it emphasizes the dynamic nature of the interplay between teachers, learners/students and tasks, so they are interaction in language classroom. Thus, by applying social interaction with democratic explorer learners, We can provide students the opportunity to do group work so that the students can interact with their friends and construct knowledge together.

Therefore, the author sets the tasks for the students such as group project and the students have to plan what they will do/how they work and find the information by themselves as well as they can share ideas in group. Furthermore, when they have some problems, the students can help their friends. When they have problems, the students usually consult their teacher for finding solution.

With reference to English language classrooms, there are different types of learners in the same class, so it can be limitation for assign the tasks. Moreover, a task is not suitable and serves for all type of learners/students. Thus, it depends on the teachers to help their learners into the Zone Proximal Development (ZPD). Moreover, teachers should know/understand the learners’ characteristics as well as how to apply the theory to help them become master in language. Additionally, the teachers should assign various activities in order to serve every type of learners in the same class.

### **Helping learners in acquiring English as second language**

The background of the first and the second language acquisition theories will be presented as follows.

Knowing how a second or foreign language (L2/English) is acquired may be useful in language teaching. This topic aims to explain the second language acquisition is, whether it is the same or different from first language (L1/Thai) acquisition, two most important factors affecting acquisition, including how to help

learners/students acquire English.

Second language acquisition is the process of becoming proficient in a second or foreign language (English) through exposure to it. These processes occur naturally when one (a child or an adult) participates in natural communication situations in the target language and are unconsciously concerned with the meaning that he is conveying and understanding. There are various theories to apply for helping learners.

According to the behaviorists, learners acquire the English language through habit formation when they receive linguistic input from their environment and positive reinforcement for correct repetitions and imitations. They make use of contrastive analysis hypothesis to predict that if there are similarities between L1 (Thai) and L2 (English), learners acquire L2 more easily. On the other hand, they will acquire English with difficulties if there are differences between the two languages.

With reference to the cognitive psychologists, learners acquire the English language by paying attention to the language, they are trying to understand or produce, and gradually become fluent and use it automatically through practice and experience that they are unable to explain how they get it (Ellis 1990).

To creative construction theorists' views, acquisition takes place while learners read and hear samples of language understandable for them. Krashen (1985) said that input hypothesis explains the second (English) language acquisition that takes place when learners receive the language input one step beyond their current

linguistic competence. For example, if a learner is at stage 'i', he will acquire L2 (English) when he is exposed to comprehensible input that belongs to level 'i + 1'. Moreover, Krashen (1985) added that the affective filter hypothesis give suggestion to learners with high motivation, self confidence, and a low level of anxiety which are more successful in acquiring L2 (English). High anxiety, low motivation, and low self-esteem can raise affective filter to delay or stop the acquisition.

If we compare second language (English) acquisition to first language (Thai) acquisition, we will find that both probably occur under the same process. Children, learners and students acquire first language and foreigners acquire a second language by receiving input modified to be understandable from their environment. Through regular practice, they can communicate automatically. However, if we pay attention to personal characteristics and conditions for acquiring of first and second language acquisition, they are greatly different. In terms of personal characteristics, L2 learners already have an idea how language works from their L1 and may experience L1 and L2 interference whereas children acquiring L1 do not. L2 learners are also cognitively mature and have or begin to develop metalinguistic awareness and knowledge of the world. They have already known how to interact with others. L1 learners do not have this or have very little knowledge of the world. Moreover, children acquiring L1 are not nervous to speak. They are naturally egocentric and not afraid to make

mistakes. Adults, on the other hand, usually suffer from language learning anxiety and nervousness because they see mistakes as failure (Brown 1994).

According to Brown (1994), In terms of learning conditions, children/learners' acquiring L1 are not pressurized to speak by the environment, if they are not ready. They can keep silent, but in acquiring L2, the learners may be forced to speak by the classroom objectives or real life situations when they have to buy things or ask for services. In acquiring L1, it is unnecessary to give corrective feedback unless the meaning is interfered whereas in a formal classroom the teacher tends to give more feedback. In addition, children expose to their L1 more frequently than learners receive L2 exposure. It is also easier for a parent to let the child engage in what he is learning, but it is hard for the teacher to make one to one interaction with the learners and make the topic being learned relevant to their lives. This can lead to a lack of motivation and concentration.

The differences between the first and second language acquisition also result from three main physical changes. The first is the presence of muscular plasticity. A child's ability to control his/her muscles (throat, larynx, mouth, lips, tongue, and other muscles) goes away at about the age of five. After this age it is hard for the learners to fully master pronunciation of L2. The second change is the memorization capabilities. As a person grows older, his ability to hold large amount of information becomes higher early in life and then begins to decrease.

This implies that L2 learners are better at memorizing. The third one is neurology. As a child matures into adulthood, the left hemisphere which controls the analytical and intellectual functions becomes more dominant than the right side which controls the emotional functions. Therefore, one advantage adults have over children is their cognitive ability, which is beneficial to analyze grammar rules (Brown 1994) and (Krashen 1985).

According to Ellis (1990), Brown (1994) and Krashen (1985), they agree the fact that second language acquisition is affected by some factors like age, aptitude, cognitive style, motivation and attitudes, and personality. In the author's opinion, the two most important ones are motivation and attitudes and personality. Motivation and attitudes are important in second language learning and acquisition in a way that positive attitudes and high motivation can bring learners success in second language learning. Positive attitudes towards the community and people who speak the second language, towards learning the target language, and towards languages and language learning in general can lead to learners' high motivation to learn the target language. When learners have either integrative motivation which occurs when the aim of learning a second language is to become a part of L2 society, or instrumental motivation, which occurs when the learners, for example, learn the second language because they want to pass the exams, to get a better job, or to read academic text, they try whichever way they can to achieve the goal. Once they try,

they expose to the language more and obtain more input. As a result they gradually acquire the second language. Therefore, no one would argue to say that positive attitudes motivate learners to be more open to language and acquisition can occur more easily.

Similarly, personality is believed to have an effect on the degree of success in learning a second language. Whether learners learn faster or more successfully depends on what kind of person they are: extrovert or introvert. Since extroverted learners are those who enjoy being with other people, it is easy for them to contact or interact with L2 speakers or native speakers. Through the contact or interaction with others, they have more social skills and expose to the language more. Therefore, they gain more input and acquire the language more easily and successfully. Introverted learners, on the other hand, are quiet and more interested in their own thoughts and feelings than spending time with other people. They have less social skills because they avoid contact with other people, so it is difficult for them to expose to the second language. They have less chance to practice using the second language than the extrovert. This might result in slow progress in learning and acquiring the second language (Ellis 1990), Brown 1994) and Krashen 1985),

With reference to the theorists' view above, we know that acquisition will occur when learners are exposed to meaningful, comprehensible input and also have the right environment to allow comprehensible input to work, the teacher can use this knowledge as a basis

to help learners acquire English. To help learners, the teacher needs to set the environment in which learners have low affective filter, low stress or anxiety, and high motivation because low motivation and increasing anxiety can raise affective filter which will prevent learners from using comprehensible input for acquisition. Too much correction can raise affective filter, so the teacher can simply lower it by ignoring some mistakes made by learners. The teacher also needs to give learners enough time to work or think and be patient to wait for the answers or responses from them. When it is appropriate, reinforcement and praise should be given in order to raise self-esteem in using the language.

Most importantly, it is the teacher's job to provide enough or lots of comprehensible input so that learners/students can acquire English more easily. The input provided should be appropriate and easy enough for the learners and/or students to understand, but just beyond their current level of competency. To those views, I would like to apply the learning theories used into my teaching in English class.

## Suggestions

The followings are the ways the teacher/the writer himself can help students to receive comprehensible input.

- In class of ENL 1004, the native teacher and the writer are the sources of input. As a model of English user, the native teachers speak English in class regularly. The teachers have to be aware or be able to know how to

speak to be understood. In teaching, when he and native teacher taught the students, we should focus not only on grammar, but also on the meaning and the natural language use for communication (grammar in context) because knowledge of grammar taught may not enable learners to use English spontaneously and fluently. They are too aware or too conscious of using grammatically correct English and therefore communicate unnaturally. Grammar should be taught through meaningful input. Letting students practice again and again can make acquisition faster.

- It is a good chance, because nowadays, computer and software (DynEd Program) are available for the students at Panyapiwat Institute of Management (PIM) and a great number of students have their own computers, tablets and enjoy communicating with foreigners via the internet. Therefore, teachers can move the students from the conventional classroom to absorb living English in the DynEd Program or ask them to do exercise related to their learning lessons. The DynEd Program is attractive because it is like an intelligent program in which the students are able to have interaction and it is similar with real communication. Therefore, the students would be more motivated to learn English and they would feel that English is closed to them.

- The teachers/the writer enable to encourage students to make the learning environment for themselves, if they want to acquire English. For example, the native teachers and he asked them to listen to CD or radio

program in English or watch English news program on television every day or they can be found on the website while the teacher is outside the class. Moreover, the teachers/the writer may asked them to do this activity as a task or assignment. The most interesting one would be watching films so, they will get familiar with real spoken English, which is probably different from classroom language. If the students are asked to do this activity regularly, they would pick up English unconsciously.

- Another way of helping learners acquire English is to advice them to read widely in English, for example, news, etc. They can read any published sources, they enjoy the newspapers, magazines, short stories, and novels. The reading can be added as an extra outside or it can be extensive reading. This includes the use of good monolingual dictionary. If they read more, they eventually pick up some idioms, patterns, phrases, especially fixed phrases which can be acquired easily.

## Conclusion

There are various types of learners/students in the English language classroom. They also have different attitude in learning, therefore, it depends on the roles of teachers in helping them into the Zone Proximal Development (ZPD). Moreover, the teachers should know and understand their learners/students' characteristics and how to apply the learning theories to support/help them to be master in language learning. Additionally, the activities in English language classroom should provide the students



to learn and acquire English. However, the teachers should understand that however the goal of first and second language acquisition is to achieve the perfect target language, many factors make the outcome of first and second

language different. Hence, it depends the teachers' responsibility in applying learning, teaching theories and helping their students in the English class.

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