The Organic Way of Language Learning

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Organic Learning and the Nature of Language Acquisition

Organic learning is self-directed, marked by errors and failures, imagination-driven, and guided by sensations. Therefore, it can be a better way of learning a language than scholastic or academic learning, as language cannot be learned or is difficult to learn in regular academic settings (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Language learning is fun as long as it does not require exams and lectures that the learner does not understand. Consequently, organic learning can be employed in language classes to improve learning outcomes and enhance the long-lasting impact by encouraging students to speak the language in class without formal assessments and input requirements. The academic settings can only provide a platform for language learners to join existing groups that speak the language that the person wants to learn (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The current language classes are boring, especially for new learners. The class focuses on reading, listening, writing, and speaking at once, which becomes hectic for the student. It becomes challenging for the students because a person new to a language has to focus on all aspects of the language at once. Due to this, the motivation for learning reduces, and the class becomes boring by the end of the semester.

Slow Learning, Enjoyment, and Classroom Practice

Hence, organic learning can be employed to make language learning classes fun and natural compared to strictly scholastic classes. To do so, the whole system of language classes must change. The language class can be for three to four semesters instead of being for a single semester. The students can be assigned to a group with peers who speak the desired language of learning. The students can focus on only one aspect of the language at a time instead of learning all four components of a language.

According to Feldenkrais, organic learning is a slow process. However, language learning is challenging and complex, especially if the language is not native. Therefore, the slow learning process can be introduced in academic language learning settings because a person learning a language can

develop the necessary skills in the desired language. For instance, if a person who has no experience with English tries to learn English for three months or four months in a conventional classroom, it will not suffice the learning requirements of the person. To excel in a language requires time. Consequently, the process of language learning must slow down for the person to be acquainted with the language and learn to speak, write, listen, and read it. Language is not a subject where a person can learn theory to pass the exam and forget it after the exam; it is a skill that is needed for a lifetime. Thus, it must be learned for a lifetime. To learn a language for a lifetime, the person must follow Feldenkrais and make it slow (Mackey, 1999).

Secondly, learning a new language is fun, but with many requirements of the conventional class, it becomes tiring. In a conventional academic class, the teacher dictates that the students learn the language in a certain way, but different people can learn the language differently. For instance, if a person learns a language by speaking, it would be useless to force that person to learn it while listening. Accordingly, the academic system can introduce a slow learning method that is suitable to the learners' needs. For instance, the schools can introduce the learners to groups where they can learn the language by living with those who speak it. The groups can be within the school or in the community, but the learner attends the groups regularly and speaks to the people, listens to them, and starts writing in the second semester when the person has some knowledge of the language. Most of the time, languages are learned best while listening to the natives and interacting with them. Introducing the students to school groups is similar to Feldenkrais's cultural learning theory. The students are learning from the environment or people with whom they stay. They speak with the natives. Although this is an intended way of learning, it is integrated with the natural and cultural factors of organic learning as suggested by Feldenkrais. The person is forced to remain with a certain group and be influenced by the people who speak the language.

Lifelong Language Development Through Organic Learning

Moreover, language is a skill for a lifetime; it must be learned without paying attention to assessments and failure. Hence, it must be assessment-free, and the only people who join the class must consider it fun. While learning the language, it is natural to make mistakes, but if the classes are in such a way that they require assessment and grading of the course, it becomes hectic and boring for the learners. Consequently, people stop learning the language because they fear failure and getting bad grades, so the classes must focus on learning, not on assessments and grades. For instance, if a person has enrolled in a course because that person is interested, such a person will learn the language and opt for improving the skills. For such a person, there is no need for extra assessment. Additionally, by removing the requirements of grading, the class will attract only interested people. Language learners can enjoy learning when they are free to make errors and use it regularly.

Furthermore, increasing the period of language classes, introducing the learner to the groups instead of a lecturer, and slowing down the language learning process will improve the learners' language abilities and natural learning. According to Feldenkrais, organic learning "increases abilities to choose more freely," and by introducing the organic way of learning, the students can learn the language according to their needs and learning capabilities. They can slowly and inherently learn the language that they desire. The whole process of learning becomes natural for the learner. The learner is neither scared of failure nor concerned about the grade. The learner focuses only on improving language skills in a group of peers. Moreover, living with the people of the native language helps the person to use the language according to the standards of the native speakers. Additionally, the language comes naturally to the learner because the person spends most of the time with the language speakers. The person learns at his/her own pace without being concerned with peers. The lack of judgment does not reduce the liveliness of the learner and does not affect the learner negatively, although it might slow down the process (Mackey, 1999).

To conclude, language learning must be through organic learning because it is a lifelong skill. Also, it is a complex process, so only interested students who can consider and make it fun must learn. Other people who are not interested must be eliminated from the language classes by accommodating it with the needs of interested learners. The learners of language must focus on the skills, and languages can be best learned in cultural settings where the learners interact with the people on a regular basis. Therefore, schools must introduce a long-semester system for language classes that groups learners with native speakers to improve language learning opportunities and skills.

References

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