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Interview notes #3

L2 Case Study: Esteven Cruz (Spanish L1, from the Dominican Republic) Date of interview: Sunday, October 16th.

Duration of interview: 1 hour 30 minutes

Setting: We are at Esteven and his partner's home/apartment chatting, watching television, and having coffee with desserts. We are sitting on the couch in the living room talking and laughing. Then, followed by my prepared questions for Esteven.

Prepared Questions:

1 - Describe how your English lessons were taught in your home country?

Esteven said that his teacher used to assign him a book to read, then he had to answer questions based of what he had read from the book. Also, the teacher used a method called audiolingual (He had to listen to a conversation, and then he had to complete the spaces in the blank with the words mentioned in the discussion). In addition, to having conversations with other classmates during the lessons.

2 - How did you practice the English you were learning?

He stated that when practicing English, his spouse has been a great support at learning English (spouse is a special education teacher). They would practice by talking about different topics on the daily basis. In addition, his partner would ask him questions regarding how his day was and such. Lastly, they used to practice making lesson plans, since Steven was doing his masters to teach in NY. Thus, they did this every day for almost two years.

3 - Do you know some English in your head, but cannot use it yet?

He said that he couldn't think of any at that moment.

4 - Do you think it was easier to learn English when you were younger?

He mentioned that he learned English as an adult, which has advantages like transferring words from one language to another and understanding grammar better. However, he believes that learning English at a younger age helps children to sound more like a native English speaker.

5 - What are the aspects of your personality that either help or don't help you learn English?

He said that what helped him learn English was that he is outgoing, not timid and do not feel ashamed of talking, even with his foreign accent. Therefore, those traits of his personality have helped him learn English faster. And as a Social Studies teacher he must be able to communicate in English, even though he teaches bilingual during his lessons.

Observations:

Esteven continues to be comfortable talking in English with me about 90% of the time. However, I have noticed that when he pronounces words that begin with the letter "S" he tends to use "ES" to pronounce it. This is common for Hispanics when learning English as a second language. Since, in Spanish the letter "S" is pronounce "ESE" therefore, Esteven tends to use it when saying "Special" he says "Especial. Another example, when he tried to say "Studied" he said "Estudy" also missing out the "ED" at the end for the past tense. But other than that, he is able to communicate and express himself in English.