Factors Affecting Second Language Acquisition

The following factors affect second language acquisition. Determine whether each factor is related mainly to the student, to the family or to the environment of the second culture. Use the following code:

S = factors primarily in the student
F = factors primarily in the family
E = factors primarily in the environment of the second culture

___ 1. Age

___ 2. Socioeconomic status

___ 3. Classroom culture

___ 4. Cognitive development in home language

___ 5. Family support

___ 6. Whether environment provides adequate L2 input

___ 7. Literacy level

___ 8. Stage in acculturation

___ 9. Whether school environment provides language use opportunities

___ 10. Maintenance of home language

___ 11. Motivation

___ 12. Expectations of child

___ 13. Sense of identity in the classroom

___ 14. How host culture views student's culture

___ 15. Proficiency in the home language

___ 16. Facility with English and ability to help child

___ 17. Role models in the community

___ 18. Date of arrival in the U.S.

___ 19. Personality

___ 20. Whether student has enough opportunities to use English

___ 21. Reason for coming to the U.S.

___ 22. Attitudes toward second culture

___ 23. Literacy in home language

___ 24. Teacher's expectations

___ 25. Preferred learning styles

___ 26. Projected length of stay in the U.S.

1S, 2F, 3E, 4S, 5S, 6E, 7F, 8S, 9E, 10S, 11S, 12F, 13S, 14E, 15S, 16F, 17E, 18S, 19S, 20E, 21S, 22F, 23S, 24E, 25S, 26F

Second Language Acquisition: A Process, not an Event

Learning a language is like:

A ROLLER COASTER RIDE
It is filled with highs and lows, dizzying twists and turns.

GOING ON A JOURNEY
The path is new terrain, filled with surprises.

SWIMMING IN THE OCEAN
One minute you're floating and the next you're overwhelmed by a wave.

BECOMING A NEW PERSON
You try new ways of behaving; sometimes it is comfortable and sometimes it is not.

When learning a new language, learners use everything they have:
Their culture
Their first language
Their educational background
Their personal experiences
Their new environment

When learning a new language, learners must learn:
New sounds
A new grammar
Lots of new vocabulary
Social and academic language
Strategies to mend communication breakdowns
How to say things appropriately in different social contexts
Many different functions of the language (disagreeing, complaining, arguing, etc.)

Students acquire a second language (and learn academic content) when they receive understandable messages.
They need comprehensible input.