

An Analysis of Children Vs Adults in Second Language Acquisition

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Article Info

Article history:

Received 22 06, 2023

Revised 06 07, 2023

Accepted 15 08, 2023

Keywords:

Children;

Adult;

Second Language.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out more about the topic of whether children are better than adults at learning a second language. Data collection in this study uses the method of analyzing two YouTube videos about whether children are better than adults in second language acquisition. It was found that both of them were able to acquire a second language well, because in learning a second language, no matter how old a person is, as long as he finds a suitable learning method and has a strong desire, of course, anything is possible.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is one main branch of Applied Linguistics. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) involves a wide range of language learning settings and learner characteristics and circumstances. Second language acquisition or SLA is the process of learning a language other than the native language (Hoque, 2017). A second language is learned after a person can speak and has absorbed the knowledge that influences him in learning a second language. For example, a child who speaks Indonesian as his mother tongue begins to learn English when he starts school. English is learned through the process of mastering a second language.

The majority of people think that children are better at acquiring a second language than adults. Young second-language learners appear to pick up another language quickly simply by exposure and without training, which tends to support this. Steinberg (2006) states that several factors engage in a second language. These factors are divided into three categories: (1) psychological, (2) social situation, and (3) other psychological variables.

Although age is an important factor in language learning, other elements like motivation, learner capabilities, exposure to the target language, interaction with real-life situations and social environment, learning time availability, socioeconomic status, and linguistic and cultural backgrounds are sometimes thought to have a greater impact. As a result, both early and late starts in language learning may succeed greatly (K. Hyland & F. Hyland, 2019).

2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method based on observations via video and the data comes from sentences produced by the MosaLingua and OuinoLanguages Youtube Channel. Qualitative research is studies that investigate the quality of interactions, activities, circumstances, or materials (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2012).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

These data are some of the factors they found about some of the advantages possessed by both adult and children's second language learners.

Video 1 (<https://youtu.be/-NcNo1jTH38>)



Children have a more porous mind; it cannot be denied that indeed children can learn faster than adults can. scientists also agree that children can absorb new information more quickly.

Adults can concepts in a more complex way. Adults are better at making associations and that can be very helpful in the language-learning process. Linking ideas in more complex ways is an adult strength that can help integrate new concepts into existing cognitive structures.

Adults are more used to communicating, Growth makes us continuously face new situations and challenges that require good communication skills. Otherwise, how do we manage our oral presentations at school, our first job interview or even applying for someone, or being proposed to? This naturally makes adults better equipped to communicate and express themselves. Moreover, this is the reason why parents might even learn languages.

Children have more courage to speak, In terms of lack of inhibition, kids have another advantage. While adults are usually afraid of making mistakes or saying the wrong thing and being judged for it, children are free from this pressure and are hardly shy about opening their mouths to speak.

Children learn pronunciation more easily, Pronunciation seems to be another area where young children excel us. First, children are usually better at imitating new sounds. Second, they also tend to be more adept at identifying subtle sound differences, which makes it easier for them to speak a new language from the start. Therefore, the younger a child is when they start learning a second language, the better their pronunciation will be.

Adults have pre-existing language knowledge. However, as adults have mastered their mother tongue. Therefore, they are more familiar with more advanced elements of grammar and syntax. Moreover, it gives us a better understanding of how language works.

Children often get more exposure to the language. An important social aspect that children usually enjoy is time. When learning a second or third language, most children do it at home, because their parents speak the language. In addition, of course, the more exposure to a language you get the better and faster you will learn it.

Adults can concentrate for longer periods. While it varies from person to person, children and teens tend to have lower retention rates - a very important skill when you are looking to learn a new language - and they tend to be less focused than adults. Estimates of the general attention span range from about 5 minutes for a two-year-old child, to a maximum of 18 to 20 minutes in adolescents and adults. therefore adults are more advantaged in this regard.

Motivation can be a real game changer. Another important aspect to consider in language learning is, as adults usually point out, motivation. Unlike children, who are sometimes forced to learn a new language at school, most adults learn a second language because they want to. On the other hand, they need to - to achieve something they want.

Video 2 (<https://youtu.be/oZ6qN4RpuBo>)



Adults Learn Better than Children in a Controlled Environment.

Research has shown that adults and adolescents learn almost every language skill faster than children do. They understand grammar, learn vocabulary, learn to read, and express complex ideas at a faster pace than children. Adults have life experience; they have learned how their memory works and how to learn. They can build on what they already know. They can learn with the help of their mother tongue to better understand the meaning of words and find similarities. Adults have many advantages over children when learning a new language. Many people forget these things and believe that it is nearly impossible to acquire a new language in adulthood. Adults learn languages very well.

Children Have Better Pronunciation Skills.

When it comes to being able to perfectly reproduce a real accent, kids are ahead. In most cases, the younger the children, the better they are at reproducing unfamiliar sounds. Children are much better at imitating new sounds than adults. This makes them sound as if they are more fluent in the new language they are learning. With age, this skill seems to decrease in efficiency; we will find it more difficult to reproduce sounds that are completely unfamiliar to us. This is by far the greatest strength children have over adults. however, it doesn't change anything in terms of fluency. Adults can learn to speak fluently, even if they have a noticeable accent in the language.

Children vs. Adult Expectations.

Adults and three-year-olds do not have the same vocabulary in their native language. So if a child learns a few hundred words in a new language, he is considered fluent because he has mastered his mother tongue. As an adult, even if you learn five times as much vocabulary as a child, you still have a lot of work to do to express complex ideas with the same level of fluency as your mother tongue. As adults, we don't realize how great we are in our mother tongue.

Adults take a lifetime to get here, so as a result, it takes adults quite a bit of time to get to that high level in a second or third language.

Feeling Self-Conscious as Adults.

These high expectations also make adults self-aware. They don't want to sound stupid when they speak a new language. Adults often avoid speaking the language and stay in their comfort zone as much as possible. The kids don't seem to care much. They start using language quickly to express what they want even though their vocabulary is very limited. The ideas are conveyed and they build their vocabulary over time. As adults, we may feel insecure. In this aspect, adults should be more like children and be fine if not perfect.

4. CONCLUSION

Second language acquisition or SLA is the process of learning a language other than the native language (Hoque, 2017). The majority of people think that children are better at acquiring a second language than adults. However, based on youtube videos it can be concluded that both children and adults can learn a second language well. Note that several factors are more beneficial for both children and adults, therefore we need to use the right method of learning a second language so that learning objectives can be realized.

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