

Children Vs Adult In Second Language Acquisition

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Abstract

This paper aims to provide a more logical response to the topic of whether children are better than adults in learning a second language by examining how children and adults interact with a second or foreign language. The process of learning a second language might come via classes, social interactions, or natural acquisition. The success of learning a second language is also greatly influenced by internal factors such as the role of the first language, motivation, and attitude of the learners. The paper's findings support the hypothesis that aging is correlated with a decline in learners' memory. As long as the person concerned has a desire to utilize a foreign language or second language for the purpose of integrating and socializing, age cannot be used as a criterion for the success rate of studying a second/foreign language other than the mother tongue.

Keywords: *Children; Adult; Second Language Acquisition.*

Abstrak

Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk memberikan respon yang lebih logis terhadap topik apakah anak-anak lebih baik daripada orang dewasa dalam belajar bahasa kedua dengan memeriksa bagaimana anak-anak dan orang dewasa berinteraksi dengan bahasa kedua atau asing. Proses belajar bahasa kedua mungkin datang melalui kelas, interaksi sosial, atau akuisisi alami. Keberhasilan belajar bahasa kedua juga sangat dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal seperti peran bahasa pertama, motivasi, dan sikap peserta didik. Temuan makalah ini mendukung hipotesis bahwa penuaan berkorelasi dengan penurunan memori peserta didik. Selama yang bersangkutan memiliki keinginan untuk menggunakan bahasa asing atau bahasa kedua untuk tujuan mengintegrasikan dan bersosialisasi, usia tidak dapat digunakan sebagai kriteria tingkat keberhasilan mempelajari bahasa kedua/asing selain bahasa ibu.

Kata Kunci: *Children; Adult; Second Language Acquisition .*

INTRODUCTION

Learning is the process of people studying in order to gain knowledge or skills. After one has established a first language, second language learning is the process of internalizing and making meaning of a second language. Learning a second language is not the same as

learning a first. A second language is learned when one has acquired the ability to communicate and has absorbed knowledge, both of which influence one's ability to learn a second language.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is the process of learning a new language after mastering one's native tongue. The first language (L1) is acquired instinctively, but the second language (L2) is learned after the first. Speaking in the first language is a talent that both adults and children may master. Children, it is widely assumed, expand their vocabulary more quickly; additionally, they achieve native-like pronunciation and pick up language instinctively.

Some individuals argue that children are better than adults at acquiring a second language in addition to their native tongue, however this has become a speculative viewpoint. This belief is based on direct observations that young language learners are faster at acquiring a second language in addition to their native tongue through habits rather than formal education.

Most of us feel that children are better at acquiring a second language than adults. This assertion is supported by a widely held belief that young second-language learners can learn another language fast through exposure rather than instruction. Steinberg in Suryantari (2018) states that there are some factors involved in second-language. For Steinberg, there are three main factors that influence the acquisition of a second language, namely psychological factors, social situations and other psychological determinants. The psychological conditions of learners are intellectual capacity, memory and learners motor skills in analyzing grammatical, vocabulary, and fluency structures. The social situation divides the learner based on the environment in which the learner lives. Social interaction, learner experience and the determinant environment both naturally and formally (in the classroom) describe the relationship between the learner and his physical environment. The learner's internal factors such as the role of the first language, motivation, and attitudes are also very important in determining the success of second language acquisition. When considering second language acquisition, a child introduced to a second language at the same time as an adult will, in almost every case, acquire a much better pronunciation. Young learners will also do better when it comes to grammar skills and fluency as stated by Lightbrown & Spada in Oroji & Ghane (in Win Listytaningrum, w. 2020)

According to other researches by Mohammad Reza Oroji and Azam Ghane in Dilrabo Babakulova (2021) younger learners acquire the language without grammatical explanation

while older ones need to be explained the rules directly. Nevertheless, some linguists believe that adults learn a second language faster and better when comparing to children. Snow in Dilrabo Babakulova (2021) considered that adults learn are better in learning a second language than children. In the research, she observed 52 English participants between the ages of 3,5 and 55 years old who were learning Dutch in the Netherlands.

Overall, several factors cause to adults' and children's foreign language input that should be taken into consideration while comparing them. This paper focuses on giving more reasonable answers to questions about whether children are better than adults in mastering the second language.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a library research project that aims to give a qualitative perspective to a specific issue. This research aims to answer the topic of how the acquisition and learning of a second language differs between adults and children. The paper discusses how adults and children overcome challenges to learning languages other than their native speech. This study also examines whether children are better at learning and mastering a second language than adults.

FINDING

The table below shows the impact of psychological and social elements on second language acquisition and learning in children and adults, based on the Steinberg (in Win Listytaningrum, w. 2020) study.

	Psychological Factors				Social Factors	
	Intellectual		Memory	Motor Skills	Situation	
	Inductive	Explicative			Natural	Classroom
Children under 7	High	Low	High	High	High	Low
Children 7 – 2	High	Medium	Med/High	Med/High	Medium	Medium
Adults Over 12	High	High	Medium	Low	Low	High

An explanation of how and how many levels of psychological and social factors affect the mastery of the second language will be described in detail in the contents of this paper.

DISCUSSION

Intellectual Process: Exploration and Induction

Exploration and induction are two aspects that influence the learner's syntactic competence to the target language during the cognitive process. Meanwhile, induction is the process of teaching learners the target language's norms and grammatical structures. The learner's first language is employed as the language of teaching during the exploratory process. Because the learner's language learning intake is still limited, this is meant to make it easier for students to understand and master the second language. As a result, learners can correctly apply and utilise the target language's grammatical rules. When the speed and accuracy of the information obtained by learners fluctuates, there are downsides to employing the exploration approach. The software is very useful for language learners who want to study languages different than their mother tongue, but it is exclusively for people who are considered slow learners. Meanwhile, fast learners may believe that the learning method is a time-consuming activity that will stymie their ability to learn and acquire other languages.

Another flaw is that, due to the differences in grammatical rules between home tongue and foreign languages, the exploration is unable to adequately explain other languages. Another issue is that normal rules in the target language are not always recorded, which makes learning difficult for language learners. Despite the fact that the exploration model employs introduction mother tongue in the teaching of foreign languages, it appears that this strategy is ineffective for children. The reason is that even parents rarely use standard rules in native languages when teaching foreign languages whether they are in simple sentences or word formations. Usually, children look for standard rules in the original language by learning and analyzing themselves or self-taught through the process of induction.

The core of the induction process is independent analysis, often known as self-discovery. Children who frequently talk as a result of their ability to listen to and memorize second language vocabulary will find it easier to analyze and locate regular rules in the second language. As explained by Krashen (in Francis Bailey & Ahmed Kadhum, 2021) that children receive a second language through natural processes long before the children are involved in formal education activities (understanding the concept of "here and now" in the form -ing, plural form, auxiliaries, etc.). Adults who learn a second language will also look for answers to questions in the target language through the process of induction. The difference is that adults are better prepared because they have had prior provision of knowledge about a second

language. The process of induction as a means of self-analysis is used to analyze and find generalizations or rules in the language. English is learned by the process of second language acquisition. In fact, a young child can learn a second language faster than an adult can learn the same language (Hoque, 2017)

Nonetheless, exploration is thought to hasten the process of language learning because it aids in the comprehension of fundamental phrase patterns. Induction, on the other hand, focuses on comprehending complex structures. The program is especially helpful for students who are still learning to understand structured sentences with subjects and predicates, where time or place adverbs are used at the beginning of the phrase.

Memory

A large component of acquiring and learning a second language is developing a vocabulary. Why? Because vocabulary is a list of terms that students should memorize. The vocabulary form includes both typical words and phrases known in English as phrasal verbs, verb-adverb combinations (particle phrases), two-word verbs, three-word verbs, and multi-word verbs. Finally, the vocabulary is divided into nouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions, adverbs, and other categories. As a result, in the acquisition and learning of second languages, the ability to remember vocabulary is critical.

When it comes to mastering a foreign language other than one's home tongue, memory is usually associated with neurology or neurolinguistics. Speech production, or language, is located not just in the left but also in the right hemisphere of the brain. Despite the fact that many specialists believe the left brain is more prominent in language production than the right. In his book Krashen, states that someone whose left brain is dissected after experiencing aphasia can still produce speech as the right brain is functioning. Because the right brain helps the patient in making speech sounds or languages stored in the left brain (Krashen in Francis Bailey & Ahmed Kadhum, 2021). He added that the right hemisphere engaged in the language process of human language ability. Otherwise, if the right hemisphere experiences damage as the person suffers a stroke, he will lose all language ability.

The learner's capacity to remember terminology is also linked to their previous experience. The language that is recalled is frequently tied to the physical or abstract shape of what is heard through the process of being heard. To be easier to recall, the learner normally

does not simply get or hear the vocabulary once or twice. Memory sharpness is also influenced by a desire to practice and apply terminology in conversation.

When a learner is learning the structure and rules of a target language, memory is also crucial. The conventional norms of a particular grammar can often be a barrier for someone, preventing memory from being separated from a learner's capacity to grasp languages other than his native tongue. When the learner is required to explain the target grammar correctly, including the time of the structure (tense), the noun that must be used when meeting particular verbs, and so on, memory might lead to an analytical action. Memory aids learners in recognizing sentence forms. However, given the flexibility of declarative memory it, too, should underlie grammatical functions, for example, by learning rules or chunks (e.g., "the cat"). A range of factors could lead to an increased dependence of grammar on declarative memory. Of interest here, since learning in declarative memory seems to improve during childhood (with possible concomitant declines in procedural learning and/or consolidation), later learners of language are predicted to depend particularly on declarative memory for grammar, while native speakers should rely more on procedural memory. Additionally, grammar should rely more on declarative memory at earlier than later stages of learning within an individual language learner, since learning in declarative memory takes place more quickly than in procedural memory. For these reasons, adult second language learners should initially rely particularly on declarative memory for grammar, although, with increasing L2 experience, they should eventually depend substantially on procedural memory (Hamrick, Lum, & Ullman, 2018)

Memory ability in children between the ages of 5 and 6 years is still at peak memory levels. When children are between the ages of 8 and 12, they begin to lose their recall skills. As a result, there appears to be a categorizing of children's memory based on their ages of under 7 years and 7-12 years. Harley and Doug (in Win Listytaningrum, w. 2020) investigate students in the immersion class revealed that older children began to use cognitive abilities in analyzing the rules of syntax in second languages, while younger children tended to still use their good memory skills in vocabulary in learning a second language. This happens because children between 7-12 years have difficulty remembering vocabulary that has been obtained so that they often do syntactic analysis when learning.

The next reason why memory capacity decreases is that second language learning will become more complex following the learners' ages between 15 or 20 years. But this decline in language skills is even more linked to linguistic processes that are deficits and

not related to memory (Bloom, Mullins, & Paternostro, in Win Listytaningrum, w. 2020). Finally Steinberg et al. try to draw the conclusion that the decrease in memory power for learners is associated with age. As young learners' cognitive abilities are still undergoing development, it is also possible that the role of WM functioning in L2 writing performance changes across grade levels. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate the role of WM in integrated tasks performed by younger learners for whom test results might determine their educational and professional future. Research on the effects of cognitive capacity limitations on various types of writing tasks might also yield useful information for teachers by helping them identify learners who might need additional support with certain types of tasks (Michel et al, 2019).

Motor skills or abilities

Learning a foreign language requires excellent pronunciation. This skill is directly linked to the learner's capacity to articulate and regulate the bones that support the speech organs. The use of bones in carrying out some activities of a generic nature, such as walking, into a more specific talent, such as writing and speaking, is referred to as motor skills in psychology. The articulation functions of the mouth, lips, and tongue, which are regulated by the bones under the direction of the brain, are included in the speaking action. The articulation function must act at the appropriate time in order for the sound to be more accurate.

Maturity and motor skills are inextricably linked. While emotional control, events, and other factors all play a role in learner development. Learners must begin at a young age in order to obtain a high level of competence in terms of motor skills. Because as children reach the age of 12, their ability to acquire motor skills begins to deteriorate. Even when a person reaches the age of 15, improving motor skills is quite difficult. This is also linked to changes in brain function. Despite their speculative nature, hormonal changes in a person who has entered puberty are supposed to alter a person's motor skills. The conclusion is, when age increases ultimately affect the decline in motor skills, the learner's level of articulation will also be disrupted. Meanwhile, children will actually improve their fluency because their age still shows flexibility in motor skills. Oyama (in Win Listytaningrum, w. 2020) point out that someone who learns foreign languages at a very early age will pronounce the vocabulary of a foreign language as a native speaker accent. Oyama studied immigrant from Italy, the younger the children the more accent they were with native speakers. Conversely Italian immigrant children who come to the United States after age 12 tend to be less fluent in pronunciation. The length

of stay does not affect the ability of articulation. Children tend not to use mother tongue as a filter so that the ability of their articulation can still be corrected when there is pronunciation.

Conclusion on the influence of psychological factors on second language learning

The variables in this study are induction, explanation, memory, and motor abilities, as stated in the table. Children under the age of seven, children between the ages of seven and twelve, and people over the age of twelve were separated into three age groups. The level of induction variables is high and is unaffected by age differences. However, according to the induction variable, individuals in the adult category (above 12 years) have the highest level since they can examine the syntactic structure in the second language.

With age, the variable that explains the level grows. Low amounts are found in children under the age of seven, followed by moderate levels in children aged seven to twelve, and high levels in children aged twelve. This is due to the fact that the younger the child is, the more difficult it is for him or her to comprehend abstract and complex explanations. Memory is the next variable. The level is high in early children, but it tends to drop to the medium level or is fixed, and it will drop to the medium level when the child is 7-12 years old. The level of remembering ability is determined by the age factor. Unfortunately, the category for adults is only limited to those over the age of 12, making it impossible to discern between the level of memory ability when a child is in his teens and the actual age of 30. Motor skills are the final aspect that influences psychological issues. The trend for mastery ability to deteriorate from low to high levels implies that age influences mastery ability. The older a learner gets, the more difficult it is to pronounce words fluently.

Social situations that affect second language learning

Despite the fact that various social contexts might influence the learning process and second language acquisition, Steinberg et al. strive to narrow the social situations that influence second language learning, namely natural and class situations.

Natural Situation

There are many different ways to teach English as a second language and as a foreign language. Children who acquire English spontaneously are frequently targeted for second language acquisition (informally). According to Steinberg, children in different nations acquire foreign languages through interaction with their playmates rather than through formal learning.

He also mentioned that youngsters pick up a second language faster than they do their first. The question that may emerge is if adults can learn a second language in the same way as children can if given the same opportunity and almost the same amount of time. Children and adults, in fact, have the equal opportunity to acquire a foreign language in addition to their native one. The difference lies only in the method used by both children and adults. What's more, the method also depends on the age factor which influences the decrease in social interaction which actually really supports foreign language learning.

Because children simplify and optimize the environment as a medium for learning foreign languages, their second language or foreign language becomes increasingly ordered and good. These children, for example, would actively ask peers if they are having problems comprehending specific vocabulary, and children like imitating their friends' accents and dialects. Instead of using language, they prefer to interact socially. Children from various linguistic backgrounds (all Indonesians) will, for example, play and exchange toys without abandoning the use of language during play. To put it another way, both children and adults may acquire a second language in natural settings; the only difference is fluency products. Adults cannot understand native speaker accents, although children can.

In natural situations where the role of language skills is very important, adults who do not have enough foreign language skills while living in a foreign country will make these adults isolated in association. This is not only experienced by adults but also children of first puberty. Similarly, native speakers tend to stay away from people who are in different languages. In social interaction, language plays an important role so that when a person is unable to speak according to the speaker, the association is automatically limited. In interacting cultures, according to Preston (in Win Listytaningrum, w. 2020), children aged 7-12 years tend to only be able to accept social norms in a certain area, while children under the age of 7 tend to be able to accept both culture and language in an area. The biggest obstacle about language learning is experienced by those in the age of 12 years or adults who tend to be confident in their identity and culture even though they are in another country.

Schumann (Qianqian Ma, 2021) in the Acculturation Model of language learning states that the level of mastery of one's language is influenced by the ability to adapt to a new environment. The more a person can acculturate to the new environment, the greater the language contact with the surrounding community, thus increasing the chance for natural

language acquisition. Unfortunately this opportunity is more often used by children so they often hear and express target language skills in conversations with native speakers.

The way children and adults use language will have a direct impact on the process of language learning. When someone travels to another nation, their mother tongue is likely to be used less frequently, hence the most common language used is the local language. If a simple conversation fails, it will have an impact on both children and adults' ability to learn foreign languages. When speaking with children, adults frequently simplify their words. Adult learners, on the other hand, may simplify their speech when the discourse becomes too heavy due to the restrictions of mastery of a particular language. However, simplifying the context of speech can help learners to remember their memory and applications, especially for children and adults. Exposure to use the target language with native speakers or people who are not native but are good for the target language will be beneficial for both children and adults in naturally acquire and master the language.

Class Situation

Foreign language instruction classes are usually special classes that take the form of formal classes. Teachers are persons who are fluent in a second or foreign language, and students are those who want to learn the language. Typically, the student responds in accordance with the teacher's instructions, allowing the teacher to contribute to the classroom's happy atmosphere. Everything in the language lesson is scheduled and prepared, so there is very little room for spontaneity. Language acquisition and learning will be aided by the linguistic situation established in the original setting, such as outside of the classroom activities including the usage of foreign languages between learners through games.

The teacher additionally creates a group language teaching strategy to ensure that language acquisition is successful and that learners are motivated to participate in class. Learners are often given assignments to complete as homework in order to improve their concentration on foreign language acquisition. It is required that learners are familiar with language instruction and regard foreign language instruction as an academic subject. As a result, they are well-versed in all grammatical structures and other foreign language regulations. As a result, the classroom should be welcoming and upbeat, and language instruction is frequently delivered through the use of games. Learners can acquire foreign languages inductively by using language classrooms as a suitable learning environment.

Because language classes involve not only learning in the form of a game but also the active participation of students in the classroom, this class is typically only appropriate for those who can adapt well. Formal classes are typically not appropriate for children under the age of seven because the teaching philosophy is not to play. Games are just one of activity or used as an introduction in delivering linguistic material to be more attractive. Those aged 7-12 years or more than 12 years can adapt better in this model of learning in the classroom because the material is taught through an exploration model. The level of teaching with class situations for children over 12 years old is high, and moderate for students aged 7-12 years but decreases to low levels for children under 7 years of age. This happens when students over the age of 7 tend to learn a foreign language or a second language with an implementation model and they know that they are learners. They have maturity that suits the class situation that requires concentration, attention, and the need to sit for a long time in class. According to Cheydeur (1932) and Thorndike (1928) as cited by Steinberg, the right age for second language learning or foreign languages is when learners can understand the reasons for learning and thinking like adults, they also have high levels of memory and motor skills. The age that fits this model is around the age of 10 years.

Motivation and Attitude

Internal aspects of the learner considerably enhance the success of the advocate in language learning, whether it is a second language or a foreign language, so that the acquisition appears more natural. The presence of motivation and attitudes toward the language will not distinguish between natural learning situations that are suitable for children inductively and class situations that are suitable for children over 7 years, or their psychological factors in seeing language as both a second language and a foreign language.

When learners consider the importance of the language as a method of communication, they will be motivated to learn and acquire foreign or second languages. Because children ages 0-4 / 5 tend to acquire language unconsciously, this will not happen. However, from the age of four or five years, children begin to consider the relevance of language in their social activities, such as playing with friends. This is when motivation comes into play.

Because the learner is placed in a certain environment, motivation is particularly important in the classroom learning approach, which tends to be organized. They are told that in order to grasp the language, they must have a high level of motivation. Many ideas claim that in order to teach languages other than one's native tongue, motivation or learning goals are

required. The desire to be proficient and to integrate for the sake of intelligence is better than learning a second language or a foreign language for other purposes, for example to get a job or something. As Staib (in Win Listytaningrum, w. 2020) which states It is common that young students learn faster and easier than adult learners in foreign language classes. Most adults are excited in learning a new language and improving language abilities, but keeping them motivated to learn throughout the course may be difficult. Adults are different from the young students in motivation in oral activities. Adult learners are not only self-motivated, but also set goals to attain them in future. Language acquisition can be another goal set by an adult person to be achieved. On the one hand, young learners are in a more beneficial position, because their parents and teachers recognize some language abilities in them or simply decide that such skills and knowledge may be important for them in future. (Ismail, 2016).

The attitude toward learning a foreign language or a second language is also a big factor in how successful you are at acquiring a second language or a foreign language. Negative attitudes about languages other than one's home tongue might interfere with memory and concentration. As a result, many attempts to learn or acquire target languages fail due to the lack of integrity among those involved in the process. Many variations that influence the negative attitudes of language learners, usually associated with different cultures that affect the personality and social environment of the learner. This negative attitude is also influenced by age factors when learners begin to think about the importance of the need to learn the target language though they are in an environment that is very different from their natural situation. The critical age for knowing attitudes in language acquisition and language teaching starts from 4/5 years of age when they begin to think of the need for a second language or foreign language for their social interests, such as playing with peers despite of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

CONCLUSION

Learning a second or foreign language for a specific purpose or acquisition of a second/foreign language can be successful if all parties engaged share the same aim, which is to communicate and integrate with the topic of fabric in a language other than their mother tongue. When the role of parents or friends is also important, the level of natural achievement that is suited for children will also succeed. Parents serve as both motivators and controllers of their children's language acquisition (not so for adults who learn target languages). Because youngsters receive language without filtering it, it is hoped that the process of learning

excellent and correct language would proceed smoothly. Such circumstances can also enhance motivation and a positive attitude toward language, allowing youngsters to participate fully in classroom learning models that require a lot of attention and concentration.

Adults, on the other hand, must be able to anticipate various hurdles in the acquisition and teaching of language by remembering that the language is a means of communication, even if it is not their native tongue. All innate cultural traits must be ruled out for easy mastering of the second/foreign language when they are required to travel directly to the original foreign language setting. One point that should be emphasized is that the diversity of languages is simply a variety of colleges with the same language objective, namely communication, regardless of cultural variations, background, or language disparities. As long as the persons involved have a desire to utilize the foreign language or the second language for the goal of integrating and socializing, age cannot be used as a criterion for the success rate of studying a second/foreign language other than their mother tongue. Diversity is unique, but it does not have to be different all of the time.

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