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AGE FACTOR IN SLA

We answered the questions that what is second language acquisition, what is the best way to teach the second language, what is the difference between language acquire and language learning language. The first difference between learning and acquire language is that we acquire language in a subconsciously, unplanned, and natural way. But we learning language consciously and planned. There are also some kinds of factors that affect our acquiring language. Age factor is an important factor in the acquiring language process. There are some kinds of researches and evidence to prove it. We also tried to clarify Lenneberg's Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH). The CPH refers to the idea that the ability to acquire language is related to aging and there is an ideal period of time to attain a language, after which it is no longer possible. The age of CPH is very different from scholar to scholar. But sometimes they take this period after puberty.

As we mentioned above that there are some advantages and disadvantages of the language learning processes in adults and children.

Age is very important in language acquisition but not a major factor. Age matters in the language learning process differently and individually. Characteristics and skills can influence this process of learning. Of course, it will be better and much more successful to encourage language learning at an early age. As the child starts learning the second language at an early age it helps the child not only learn but also acquire the second language and reach a native-like level with less effort and time.

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Second language acquisition and second language learning are completely different things. We tried to compare these two. Second language acquisition is a process in which we acquire language until puberty. On the contrary second language learning is the process which we learn a language after puberty. We made some researches and tried to explain the connection between second language acquisition and age factor. What is the role of age in second language acquisition? What is the best way to teach a second language? What is Critical Period

Hypothesis? What is the difference between early and late bilinguals? How does code switch work in early and late bilinguals? In our article, we answered these questions according to our researches and our own experiences.

The Critical Period Hypothesis can be defined as "the period during which a child can acquire language easily, rapidly, perfectly, and without instruction" [12] As Lenneberg (1967) states in his famous book *Biological Foundations of Language* at the age of two or three years the period when

the language can be acquired easier than in other times of life.

It is generally believed that younger learners have certain advantages over older learners in the second language learning process. The common notion is that younger children learn L2 easily and quickly in comparison to older children [7]. The relationship between age and success in SLA, although detailed in nature, is connected with the Critical Period Hypothesis. CPH, also known as "the sensitive period," is defined as "the period during which a child can acquire language easily, rapidly, perfectly, and without instruction" [12]. The CPH suggests that a period, between birth and somewhere around the age when a child enters puberty, exists in which the learning a second language can be accomplished more rapidly and easily than times falling outside of this period i.e. post-puberty [15].

The first language learned by a baby is his/her mother tongue. It is the language, which s/he listens to from his/her birth. Any other language learned or acquired is known as the second language. There are some differences between second language acquisition and second language learning. The first difference is that the second language is a natural process. We acquire language subconsciously. No one planned this process to teach us second language. We just acquire second language as our mother tongue. On the contrary second language learning is a completely planned process. We learn language consciously. Unlike second language acquisition, second language learning is planned. It is taught us by our teacher or professors or someone else. Adult learners learn a language but young learners acquire language.

There are also some differences between first language (mother tongue) and the second language. The first difference is that we acquire the first language from our birth. But we acquire our second language from 2 or 3 years old. It can happen in some situations. For example: imagine you were born in a French-speaking family and you live in America. Automatically French will be your first language (mother tongue) because your parents speak with you in French. When you were 2 you went to the kindergarten and your environment, society, friends, neighbors are English speaking people. So English will be your second language. You acquire these two languages until your puberty. When you were 14 you moved to Italy and you learned the Italian language and this will be your foreign language because you learned this language after puberty.

It is argued that second language acquisition is learned among children in two ways, simultaneously or sequentially as demonstrated by Halgunseth [6] as she cites [8]. Young children acquire their first language

or mother tongue and their second language without any effort through a process which is called simultaneous second language learning. According to Halgunseth (2009), simultaneous learners are children who are under the age of three who are exposed to their mother tongue at home and another language in an early educational context such as kindergarten or other early programs. However, those learners can also be children from a multi-language home where the child is exposed to two different languages at home, for example, Spanish from mom and English from dad [6], as cited by [8]. Halgunseth [6] said that in a sequential language learning

environment, the child speaks its native language but is also exposed or introduced to a second language. For example, as we mentioned before a child whose native language is French but he lives in America and he goes to English school in

America.

Halgunseth also states that contrary to simultaneous language learning, sequential learning is not related to any age factor, but it can be stimulated or influenced by elements like motivation. There are four stages of sequential second language learning according to Halgunseth, they are:

Home language use: in some cases, children refuse to use their mother language when his or her environment does not understand them.

Silent Period: children have some difficulties while speaking but they rely on their nonverbal communication.

Telegraphic and Formulaic Speech: at this stage children will start to use their target language but they omit some prepositions. They use only short phrases in their target language and repeat other people's words. It looks like when people send telegram because they also use essential words. At this stage children kind of simplify their speech.

Productive Language: Halgunseth [6] stated that at this stage children assemble their first and own sentences. Their sentences can be basic and full of mistakes but in the process of time, they will improve and correct them.

There are some aspects of the decision about how to teach children second language acquisition. They are:

- the language is spoken at home
- amount of opportunity to practice the second language
- motivation of the learner

- the reasons why learner wants to learn the second language (for example: for a work interview, to communicate with friends, for education, etc.)

A family is a small unit of society. Everything starts with a family such as education, love, manner, etc. Children acquire their first language from their families. Their parents should encourage them to learn the language. They should support and motivate them. Parents should make the environment to improve their children's language abilities. Children need to practice their

language and parents should help them to practice their language and they should also remember that they are the first environment of their children and they should prepare them for social life. Parents can also send their children some kindergarten, school, course where children can get an opportunity to practice and improve their language with others.

Motivation is one of the essential factors of learning the second language. In the teaching-learning process, children need two kinds of motivation: the first one is external motivation and the second one is internal motivation. Teachers, parents, friends and the environment can motivate children to learn a language. Internal motivation is that it comes from inner, they have the interest to learn anything they motivate themselves to learn anything like: "I can do it. I am capable of it. It is a piece of cake for me."

When children and adults learn anything they need a reason. They should have aims for it. It can be an educational purpose, to improve their language ability, for their works or pass their work interview. Sometimes they learn the second language to fit in society, to communicate with other

people, to get any certificate, to be aware of another culture, etc. If you don't have any purpose for learning a language you won't be successful. But if you have aim it will give you extra stamina and interest in learning language even if the hardest moments.

Children can learn a language in some situations. They are:

1. *By setting*- For example you were born in America in the Azeri family. Azerbaijani is spoken only in the home by parents, and English is spoken only in the school by teachers, peers. This situation mostly happens when you move to another country.

2. *By topic*- for example: for example, Azerbaijani language is spoken only breakfast or dinner time, but English is spoken only when you talk about school or school activities.

3. *By speaker*- for example, Azeri girl married to an English guy. In this case, their children will speak in both Azerbaijani and English languages. This situation mostly happens in international marriages.

The Role of CPH in SLA

What is the Critical Period Hypothesis? The CPH refers to the idea that the ability to acquire language is related to aging and there is an ideal period to attain a language, after which it's no longer possible. This hypothesis was originally proposed by W. Penfield and L. Roberts (1959) and followed up by Lenneberg (1967).

According to Lenneberg, there is a kind of an ideal "window" of time in our brain to acquire language in a linguistically rich environment but after pass, this period acquiring language becomes much more difficult and effortful. According to Paradis, the CPH "applies to implicit linguistic competence. The CPH also claims that

natural language acquisition is available to young children, but it is limited in older adolescents and adults. Erika Nolin claims that

language acquisition must occur by the age of puberty before cerebral lateralization is completed.

We are also supporters of Critical Period Hypothesis. There are some factors that persuade us. After puberty brain completes its language-learning ability. Researches also show that after a critical period you can't achieve native-like pronunciation, grammar, structure, etc. When you try to learn a language you will compare your first language (mother tongue) and second language. For example: when we learn French or Russian we always compare it with English or Azerbaijani, their grammar, their pronunciation because our speech apparatus adjust to English and Azeri languages and it makes to learn a language for us. But for example: when you send your child to Russian sector kindergarten or school he or she will acquire this language as his or her mother tongue because age matters in the language learning process. Another example of the proof of CPH is that we can show immigrants in the USA. No matter how many years they live in the USA their speech is not the same as native speakers'. The reason is that they pass their Critical Period age, so they can't achieve native-like pronunciation, grammar, sentence structure, etc. But for example: if their children live in the USA from their birth they will have native-like speech. Because they don't complete their language learning ability, they were born in this society. There are also some pieces of evidence for Critical period hypothesis, such as case studies.

CPH case studies

For proving 'Critical Period' Hypothesis there are several pieces of evidence discovered.

There have been several cases like abusing or isolating little children from their natural environment with little or no human contact. Genie is also one of such kind of children.

1. Genie's case

Genie was 1.5 years old when she was isolated in a dark small room by her father. Police think that because of the doctor's wrong diagnoses Genie's father thought that she was retarded, that's why he locked Genie up in a dark room. In this room, during the next 12 years, Genie was tied in a chair that she could only move her hands and legs. Her father forbids Genie's mother and elder brother to communicate even to see her. The only person that Genie could communicate was his father when he brought her dinner. But instead of speaking like a normal person Genie's father kept barking and growling at her.

Genie was found on November 4, 1970, in Los Angeles, California. She only was 13 years old. She was afraid of everyone, didn't like the sunshine, she could even barely walk, and cannot speak a word. All she could be just make sounds. Genie's father committed suicide after Genie's discovery by the police. That's why it will be a mystery that why he isolated his daughter. Genie's mother was blind and she was who denounced his husband and gave information about

Genie's bondage. But still, she didn't give enough information to discover the case.

"The case name is Genie. This is not the person's real name, but when we think about what a genie is, a genie is a creature that

comes out of a bottle or whatever but emerges into human society past childhood. We assume that it isn't a creature that had a human childhood," explained Susan Curtiss in a 1997 Nova documentary titled *Secrets of the Wild Child* [5].

After Genie's discovery she was sent to the rehabilitation center where she got treatment and started acting much better than when she was found. Although her actions farther from being "normal" she started socializing and get used to the natural environment. Doctor Curtiss mentioned that Genie wasn't a retarded child and she would be able to acquire the language. Although Genie could manage to improve her vocabulary and put several words together while speaking she still couldn't manage to create a normal sentence, even simple sentences. Her morphology and syntax never improved. This case proves Lenneberg's 'Critical Period' Hypothesis. Because of Genie's learning ability shows that Genie's case is a weak version of CPH.

Today, Genie lives in an adult foster care home which is located somewhere in southern California. Little is known about her present condition. But an anonymous individual hired a private investigator to track her down in 2000 and described her as happy.

2. Victor's case

Victor, who is also called the Wild Boy of Aveyron was captured when he was a baby and kept in a cave. He lived his entire life in the woods. Victor was found in 1797 near Saint Sernin Sur Rance, Aveyron. Later he emerged from the forest on his own on January 8 in 1800. His age was unknown but people estimated that he was nearly twelve years old. Victor couldn't speak even a word, he could only make some animal sounds,

couldn't walk properly like a normal human being as he spent all his life in the forest like an animal. As Victor was found at the end of Enlightenment scholars concluded that by studying the wild boy they would find an answer to the CPH.

Later Victor was taken to the National Institute of the Deaf to check and be sure if he is capable of hearing. A young medical student Jean-Marc Gaspard Itard started learning Victor on his own and tried to teach him the language. Though Victor showed remarkable progress on socializing and understanding commands he couldn't manage speaking. That's why after five years' training Itard gave up teaching the wild boy. The only words Victor managed to learn were lait (milk) and Oh Dieu (oh God).

Modern scholars after examining such cases started believing that, to be successful language acquisition must take place before the critical period hypothesis. Also, Victor's case supports Lenneberg's CPH's strong version.

Victor, the wild boy of Aveyron died in 1828 in Paris.

3. *Jim's case*

Jim was a normal hearing child of deaf parents who had less contact with people in the natural environment. His only communication was with television and radio. That's why at the age of 3.9 it was discovered that Jim has a lower level of communication ability than his peers. Unusually his parents never used sign language with Jim for communication. Jim used difficult unconnected words for expressing his thoughts. His sentences were both morphologically and syntactically wrong. Also, he pronounced the words wrong.

At the age of 4.2, after training and communication with adults, Jim managed to reach the same level as the other children at his age. Interestingly, Jim's little brother Glenn didn't have such kind of problem as he had his brother, Jim as a communication partner.

The fact that Jim couldn't acquire the language at a proper age is because of the environment, not the child. That proves that for acquiring a language television and radio are not enough, a child needs a normal communicative environment in which can be corrected by others. One-to-one interaction gives a child to reach the level in which his peers are. The environment gives children a chance to be corrected by adults if they don't understand or make mistakes during a conversation.

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İKİNCİ DİLİN MƏNİMSƏNİLMƏSİNDƏ YAŞ FAKTORU

Biz yuxarıda ikinci dilin mənimsənilməsi nədir, ikinci dil öyrətməyin ən yaxşı yolu nədir, dilin mənimsənilməsi və dil öyrənilməsi arasındakı fərq nədirsuallarına cavab verdik. Dili öyrənmək və dili mənimsəmək arasındakı ilk fərqbudur ki, biz dili şüurlu şəkildə deyil, plansız və təbii formada mənimsəyirik. Lakin biz dili şüurlu və planlı şəkildə öyrənirik. Bizim dili mənimsəməməizə təsir edən bəzi amillər də vardır. Yaş faktoru dilin mənimsənilməsi prosesində ən vacib amildir. Bunu sübut etmək üçün bir sıra tədqiqatlar və dəlillər mövcuddur. Biz Lenneberg-in Kritik Dövr Hipotezasını (CPH) aydınlaşdırmağa çalışdıq. Bu hipotez, dilin mənimsənilməsi bacarığının yaş ilə əlaqəli olduğu və bir dil əldə etmək üçün ideal bir müddətin olduğunu, bundan sonra artıq mümkün olmadığı fikrini irəli sürür. Dilin mənimsənilməsi üçün ideal yaş periodu alimdən alimə fərqlidir, lakin çox vaxt bu dövrü yetkinlik dövründən sonra qəbul edirlər.

Dilin mənimsənilməsində yaş çox vacib amildir, lakin əsas amil deyil. Buproses hər kəsdə fərqli və individual olur. Şəxsin fərdi keyfiyyət və bacarıqlarımənimsənilmə prosesinə öz

təsirini göstərir. Əlbəttə, dilin mənimsənilməsinə erkən yaşda təşviq etmək daha yaxşı və uğurlu nəticə göstərəcəkdir. Uşağın erkən yaşlarda ikinci dil öyrənməyə başlaması ona nəinki dili öyrənməsinə, həm də ikinci dili mənimsəməsinə və daha az səy və vaxtla həmin dilin daşıyıcıları-nın səviyyəsinə çatmasına kömək edir.

Açar sözlər: ikinci dilin mənimsənilməsi, yaş faktoru, birinci dil, kritik dövr

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ВОЗРАСТНОЙ ФАКТОР ПРИ ОВЛАДЕНИИ ВТОРЫМ ЯЗЫКОМ

Мы ответили на приведенные выше вопросы о том, что такое овладение вторым языком, как лучше всего преподавать второй язык и в чем разница между усвоением языка и изучением языка. Первое отличие между изучением языка и его освоением заключается в том, что мы учим его не сознательно, а незапланированно и естественно. В свою очередь второе отличие это то, что мы изучаем язык осознанно и систематически. Есть также некоторые факторы, которые влияют на наш язык. Возрастной фактор является наиболее важным фактором в процессе овладения языком. Существует целый ряд исследований и доказательств, подтверждающих это. Мы попытались уточнить гипотезу Леннеберга о критическом периоде (СРП). Эта гипотеза предполагает, что овладение языком связанос возрастом и что существует идеальное время для овладения языком, что больше невозможно. Идеальный возраст для овладения языком варьируется от ученого к ученому, но часто принимается после полового созревания.

Возраст является очень важным фактором в овладении языком, но это не главный фактор. Этот процесс индивидуален и индивидуален для всех. Индивидуальные качества и способности человека влияют на процесс приобретения. Конечно, поощрение овладения языком в раннем возрасте приведет к лучшим и более успешным результатам. Начало изучения второго языка в раннем возрасте не только помогает ребенку выучить язык, но и овладеть вторым языком и достичь уровня носителей языка с меньшими усилиями и временем.

Ключевые слова: овладение вторым языком, возрастной фактор, родной язык, критический период

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