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Children's Abilities to Learn New Languages

Durdona Eshboeva

International Islamic academy
The Faculty of Classical oriental Philology,
The teacher of the department Foreign Languages
+998901307374
eshboyevadurdona@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The article discusses the issue of teaching English to preschool learners. In order to have a conclusion and give recommendation on the problem, the literature in the sphere were studied and the results of research have been provided.

Keywords:

preschool education, English, methods, analysis, development

Learning new activities or skills, especially learning foreign languages is really complicated for young people. The main purpose of this study is to explain methods of learning new languages and solve some learning problems of children. It is theoretical and experimental research study that helps us acquire the nature of first, second or third languages to develop language learning skills of children. Also, it is checked that whether these methods or experiments are transferable or not. It is claimed in this article that discourse skills in the first language carry on improving during primary school years.

Some feel that since it is challenging for children to learn a foreign language, schools should not emphasize this subject area. The challenge is the entire justification for supporting second language education. Critics argue that the majority of children are simply incapable of learning an additional language. The best evidence for this is anecdotal and relates to the increasingly large burden of work placed on young children. Schools in many parts of the world, particularly

in high-achieving nations such as South Korea and Japan, are in session for many hours and students learn an array of subjects. They are usually taught English, the world's *lingua franca*, and this is especially difficult for speakers of Asian languages, where there is little shared linguistic history. The end result is often that students waste time and may feel discouraged and lack self-esteem.

However, children can learn languages better than adults and the challenge presented is itself an important lesson. If the schools have invested in proper training and use engaging materials then the lessons will not be boring and there is a stronger likelihood of success. Research has shown that language learning is most effective before the age of 7, with pronunciation becoming a stumbling block for older learners who already have fixed vocal formations. Moreover, the difficulty of learning a language encourages children to work harder and expand their ability to learn in creative ways. This applies to all subjects but languages stand out as students must

seek novel memorization techniques and view the world from a completely different perspective. Young learners need action and active involvement much more, especially when learning a foreign language.

As Lynne Cameron stated "Important work from the USA is showing that first language proficiency does not develop as a single, global phenomenon, but that different domains of language use develop differently. In a project to investigate the language development of children aged 14-32 months, language was measured across the linguistic domains of phonology, morphology, lexis, syntax, conversation and discourse, and have been shown to be largely independent. Extended discourse seems to develop differently from conversation. Furthermore, a connection has been found between children's early experiences with language use in their families, and their language development in various domains. In families where narratives are told around the dinner table, on topics such as what happened to parents at work or siblings at school, children develop narrative and discourse skills faster; children whose families use a wide vocabulary develop faster in the lexical domain."

Due to the advancements in communication systems, the relation among nations has been increased markedly. As a result of this, learning a foreign language at an early age has become a controversial issue in the global village. Some experts claim that primary school is the best place for learning another language instead of secondary school. There are several advantages of studying a foreign language from primary level. First and foremost, during this period, children are more flexible and they can grasp any language very easily. But, if they try to learn in their secondary level, they cannot follow rules and regulations of other languages easily due to the greater influence of mother language. Next, naturally, children are more curious and eager to learn new things in their tender age. Therefore, proficiency and fluency in new or unfamiliar language can be achieved at primary school which would help them enormously in the long run. Lastly, excellence in foreign languages is

greatly beneficial for professional development as well as financial betterment. Since a long time is needed for acquiring deep knowledge in every language, every child has to start learning a second language as early as possible, otherwise, their future will not be safe.

The proponents of this view discuss that there are many reasons behind of their claims. The most important one is about recent research. The studies have shown that the children between 4-9 ages have a great opportunity to learn new languages. Also, they clarify their claims by an example, a survey among 200 pupils, has shown that the above mentioned ages have a crucial role in children building character and developing their personality. Moreover, give the special care and settle down proper curriculum could be much beneficial for them in this way. Consequently, because of carefree mind children can catch more points in this level.

It has several advantages. Firstly, learning a foreign language is helpful for the growth of a child's brain. A study by United Nations has proved that learning any language other than the native one activates various new parts of the brain which were never used before. As a result, it increases the grasping and learning-power of a child. Not only this, it also accelerates the working of one's brain. Therefore, making kids to learn a new language at an early age will help them in their mental growth.

Published data on the outcomes of early language learning come from the North American experience with immersion teaching, where native speakers of English are placed in French-speaking nursery and infant schools, and vice versa these contexts, children who have an early start develop and maintain advantages in some, but not all, areas of language skills. Listening comprehension benefits most, with overall better outcomes for an earlier start; pronunciation also benefits in the longer term, but this is restricted to learning language in naturalistic contexts, and will not necessarily apply to school-based learning. Younger children learn the grammar of the L2 more slowly than older learners do, so that although they start earlier with language learning, they make slower progress, and

overall gains are not straightforwardly linked to the time spent learning. Learning a second language through immersion differs from learning a foreign language as a subject lesson several times a week; immersion pupils study school subjects through the second language and thus have more exposure and more experience with the language. However, it is unlikely that the difference in quantity of language learning experience will affect the balance of benefits; in foreign language learning too, receptive skills are likely to remain ahead of productive skills, and grammatical knowledge, which is linked not just to language development but also to cognitive development, is likely to develop more slowly for younger children.

In addition, nowadays people are being drifted towards multinational companies. Here, opportunities are more for employees who know more than one language. Being multilingual helps a person get onsite opportunities. Hence, getting growth in career depends on this. Infosys, for instance, gives priority to their employees who have a good command over the English language, for any vacancy they have in the USA. Therefore, getting used to a language at an early age will make one comfortable and confident.

To sum it up, teaching young learners a foreign language is a challenging job, but it is also much more rewarding than teaching older children. I strongly believe that learning English at an early age is undeniably more favourable in terms of adaptable and flexible nature of children.

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