

## **BETWEEN ACQUISITION AND LEARNING: ADULT SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROCESS**

### **ANTARA AKUISISI DAN BELAJAR: PROSES PEMEROLEHAN BAHASA KEDUA PEMBELAJAR DEWASA**

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#### **Abstract**

*Language acquisition and learning posit the way children get their second language. It defines the process of getting the language in which they may develop it in different circumstance. In the early ages, they acquire their second language in which it can be done through children - mother's communication or even through their social communication. Later, they tend to learn the second language. On the other hand, as they grow older and become adult, they conciously learn language. However, it is not always assumed that adult get their second language through learning but it is rather acquiring. Adult have more time exposure to a language acquisition that it shows their acquisition process is bigger than children's. The input also determines the acquirers to stimulate the language production where it refers to language competence and language performance in which both of them are also the principle of language acquisition.*

*Keywords: Acquisition, Learning, Language Process*

#### **Abstrak**

*Proses pemerolehan dan belajar bahasa mengandaikan cara anak-anak mendapatkan bahasa kedua mereka. Artikel ini mendefinisikan proses pemerolehan bahasa di mana mereka mengembangkannya dalam situasi-situasi yang berbeda. Pada usia dini, mereka memperoleh bahasa kedua mereka melalui komunikasi ibu - anak atau bahkan melalui komunikasi sosial mereka. Kemudian, mereka cenderung untuk belajar bahasa kedua. Di sisi lain, saat mereka tumbuh dewasa dan menjadi dewasa, mereka dengan sadar belajar bahasa. Namun, itu tidak bisa diasumsikan bahwa orang dewasa mendapatkan bahasa kedua mereka selalu melalui pembelajaran tetapi sebenarnya mereka hanya sekedar mengakuisisi. Orang dewasa memiliki waktu akuisisi bahasa yang lebih banyak sehingga menunjukkan proses akuisisi mereka lebih besar dari pada anak-anak. Input juga merangsang produksi dan kompetensi bahasa pengakuisisi dimana keduanya juga merupakan prinsip akuisisi bahasa.*

*Kata kunci: Akuisisi, Belajar, Proses Bahasa*

## A. INTRODUCTION

Some children grow up in a social environment where more than one language is used and are able to acquire a second language in circumstances similar to those of first language acquisition. Second language acquisition reflects to the development of new system of language. Language acquisition rises both for children and adult. However, there are some theorists who distinguish between children and adult second language acquisition. On particular circumstance of language development is that adult can also acquire language. Pinker (1994) argues that children's acquisitions of a normal language (phonology) emerge steadily at the early age up to six which is compromised from then until shortly after puberty, and is rare thereafter. Thus, it is not completely acceptable to understand that acquisition can only be done by children.

The nature of the language development done by the human is that how human get the language through. Both children and adult have their own pattern in getting the knowledge of language development. However, there is fundamental process in which it elaborates the process of getting use of language. Furthermore, in terms of language acquisition, there are two key terms when it deals with language acquisition. They are language acquisition and language learning, a) *language acquisition*, is a subconscious process; language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication, b) *language learning*, refers to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules being aware

of them, and being able to talk about them (Krashen, 1982:11).

The concept of acquisition and learning must be understood well particularly for those who are concerned with the study of it. The acquisition-learning distinction is perhaps the most fundamental of all the hypotheses to be presented here. It states that adults have two distinct and independent ways of developing competence in a second language. The first way is language acquisition, a process similar, if not identical, to the way children develop ability in their first language. Language acquisition is a subconscious process; language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication (Krashen, 1982: 102). The result of language acquisition, acquired competence, is also subconscious. We are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the languages we have acquired. Instead, we have a "feel" for correctness. Grammatical sentences "sound" right, or "feel" right, and errors feel wrong, even if we do not consciously know what rule was violated.

Language acquisition is the process of acquiring the language whether it is first, second, third, fourth, etc. Ritchie and Bathia (2004) state that second language acquisition is the phenomenon that has come to occupy an important place in the understanding development of the human capacities for language. This means that human language develops from time to time, starting from the first language into second, third, or fourth language. The second language learner differs from the first language learner in two critical ways. Haznedar and Gavrusseva (2013) distinguish the first language learners and the second language learners in that:

1. The second language learner begins the process of acquisition at a time she or

- he has matured past age when the first language is normally acquired
2. The second language learner has a language system in a place

Ellis (1996: 4) also adds that sometimes a distinction made between a 'second' and a 'third' or even a 'fourth' language. However, it is said that the term second is generally used to refer to any language other than the first language. Furthermore, Ellis (1996) takes a conclusion that second language acquisition becomes the term that may be used to mean the acquisition of mother tongue. In line, Krashen (1981: 2) made the difference between the terms of acquisition and learning. Krashen points out that language acquisition is very similar to the process children use in acquiring first and second language. It requires meaningful interaction in the target language natural communication in which speakers concern not with the form of their utterances but with messages they are conveying and understanding. In acquisition, the acquirer doesn't have to have a conscious awareness of the rules they possess, and may self correct only on the basis of a feel for grammatically. While conscious language learning, on the other hand, is thought to be helped a great deal by error correction and the presentation of explicit rules.

Adult acquisition can be seen in a language competence as it is the result of unconscious process of getting language system. Krashen (1982: 43) adds that age can also give effect on second language acquisition:

1. Adults proceed through the early stages of second language development faster than children do
2. Older children acquire faster than younger children, time and exposure held constant
3. Acquirers who begin natural exposure to second languages during childhood generally achieve higher second

language proficiency than those beginning as adults.

Language competence tends to the ability of linguistic or syntactic rules. Brown (2000: 30) who states that competence refers to one's underlying knowledge of a system, event, or fact. Linguistically, in building a communication, adult precisely produce more and more sentences in which the communication brings out the rules of grammar. In this case, adult are unconscious as they acquire new system of language. Dealing with language competence, adult acquisition may emerge as their monitor hypothesis works in the process of communication. Moreover, human are equipped with the capacity of innate. As it brings out by Chomsky (2000: 78) claims that is human is born with innate knowledge of predisposition toward language. Humans have a biological tool in their brain that enable them acquire language naturally called LAD or 'Language Acquisition Device'.

#### **A. KRASHEN HYPOTHESES OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

Krashen (1982), elaborates his five hypotheses dealing with second language acquisition. These hypotheses enlighten the notion of acquisition and learning done by the adults or even children. The most rigorous hypothesis among the others which gives more explanation to adult acquisition is '*the input hypothesis*'. We acquire only when we understand language that contains structure that is "a little beyond" where we are now. We also use context, our knowledge of the world, our extra-linguistic information to help us understand language directed at us. The input hypothesis runs counter to our usual pedagogical approach in second and foreign language teaching. As Hatch in Krashen (1982: 20) has pointed out, our assumption has been that we first learn

structures, then practice using them in communication, and this is how fluency develops. The input hypothesis says the opposite. It says we acquire by "going for meaning" first, and as a result, we acquire structure! There are two parts of input hypothesis as it follows:

1. The input hypothesis relates to acquisition, not learning.
2. We acquire by understanding language that contains structure as it beyond our current level of competence ( $i + 1$ ). This is done with the help of context or extra-linguistic information.

However, it Krashen (1982) says that if the Monitor hypothesis is correct, that acquisition is central and learning more peripheral, then the goal of our pedagogy should be to encourage acquisition. Some of individual variations, we see in adult second language acquisition and performance can be accounted for in terms of differential use of the conscious monitor. Monitor hypothesis posits that acquisition and learning are used in very specific ways. Monitor hypothesis implies that formal rules, or conscious learning, play only a limited role in second language performance (Krashen, 1982: 17). Furthermore, he explains that monitor use results in the rise in rank of items that are 'late-acquire' in the natural order, items that the performers has learned but not has acquired.

### *1. Monitor over-user*

These are people who attempt to monitor all the time, performers who are constantly checking their output with their conscious knowledge of the second language. As a result, such performers may speak hesitantly, often self correct in the middle of utterances and are also concerned with correctness that they cannot speak with any real fluency.

### *2. Monitor under-user*

These are performers who have not learnt or if they have learnt, prefer not to use their conscious knowledge even when condition allow it. Under-users are typically uninfluenced by error correction, can self correct only by using a 'feel' for correctness and rely completely on the acquired system.

### *3. The optimal monitor user*

Our pedagogical goal is to produce optimal user, performers who use the monitor when it is appropriate and when it does not interfere with communication. Many optimal user will not use grammar in ordinary conversation where it might interfere. Therefore, optimal user can use their learned competence as a supplement to their acquired competence.

## **B. ADULT SECOND LANGUAGE PROCESS**

Some theorists have assumed that there is a distinction between children and adult in second language acquisition. It is assumed that the ability of acquiring second language depends on particular period. In other words, there is a certain time which can only provide human to acquire language, it is called puberty. In this case, children acquire the language while adult learn language. It can be also said that the ability of picking up disappear after children reach the puberty. However, this argument is still in doubt among the theorist. According to Krashen (1982: 10) who states that the ability of acquiring doesn't disappear in a certain level after the puberty. This doesn't mean that adult will always be able to achieve native like levels in a second language but it does mean that adults can access the same natural "language acquisition device" that children use. Thus, the acquisition is a very powerful process in the adult.

Moreover, in a matter of language learning, children differ from adults when

it comes to learning. Some of the basic differences between children and adults as learners are (Krashen, 1982):

<b>Children</b>	<b>Adults</b>
1. Rely on others to choose what is important to be learned	1. Decide for themselves what is important to be learned
2. Accept the presentation of important information	2. Need to substantiate the information based on their beliefs and experience
3. Have expectations that what they are learning will be useful in their long term future	3. Expect that what they are learning will be immediately useful
4. Have little or no experience upon which to build	4. Have much experience upon which to build

When adults undertake to learn through their own initiative, they start with an existing experience. Then they observe the experience, reflect on it and identify what new knowledge or skill they need to acquire in order to perform more efficiently. They create abstract notions and generalizations. Consequently, they test their concepts and generalizations in new situations, thus gaining new experiences. Adults bring a wealth of personal experiences to any learning situation. Anything that is presented in a learning session will be filtered through those personal experiences. Encouraging and inviting adult learners to participate in this way also encourages them to be active learners who take responsibility for their own learning. It also demonstrates the fact that the teacher values and respects their experiences which may be a key tool for the success of adult language teaching.

During childhood, language acquisition is a natural effect of long-lasting exposure to a language. A child does not need to be formally taught a

spoken language in order to acquire it. Any young child will acquire native fluency in any language if exposed to it on a regular basis in a social environment. A child will naturally acquire native fluency in more than one language under such circumstances. In the vast majority of individuals, though, this natural skill to acquire a spoken language without deliberate effort begins to diminish roughly at about the age of puberty (12-14 years of age). Teenagers exposed to a new language after this age will acquire it with definite interference from whatever language or languages they had been exposed to before puberty. Practically speaking, language acquisition by adults is in fact language learning, that is, a deliberate, thorough, intellectual process that rarely, if ever, results in the level of native fluency acquired so naturally by any young child, despite intellectual ability or personal motivation. The deficiency is mainly obvious at the level of phonetics, and adults who learn second languages usually speak them with some recognizable non-native accent.

Thus, language acquisition by children and language learning by adults are noticeably distinct phenomena. If every child, regardless of intellectual stage, is equally gifted at acquiring language, the case of adults is entirely different. Some adults can learn a second language with something close to native fluency; others will retain a distinct foreign accent even after years of practice which might make us think that some adults possess a special ability for learning languages after the critical age. Although any adult can learn a second language, not all will do so with equal results. Although there are differences in the ability of individual adults to acquire a second language, any adult of reasonable abilities, if given enough time, enough opportunity, and, probably most importantly, having enough desire, can learn to communicate in any language. But the degree of eventual fluency achieved will differ

considerably from one individual to another, unlike the situation with child language acquisition, where every child achieves perfect fluency if there is enough exposure.

In a matter of language acquisition, the term of intake is very important. This follows from our conclusions that language acquisition is more central than language learning in second language performance. "Intake" is, simply, where language acquisition comes from, that subset of linguistic input that helps the acquirer acquire language (Krashen, 1981: 102). It appears to be the case of the major function of the second language classroom is to provide intake for acquisition. This being a very difficult task, one could also say that the major challenge facing the field of applied linguistics is to create materials and contexts that provide intake. From these characteristics, it can be said that intake is first of all input that is understood. Indeed, comprehension may be at the heart of the language acquisition process, perhaps we acquire by understanding language that is "a little beyond" our current level of competence. This is done with the aid of extra-linguistic context or our knowledge of the world.

### C. CONCLUSION

In a second language acquisition, there are some aspects reviewed in order to broaden how language acquires. There is no a great amount of the distinction between children and adult language acquisition. It is not only children who can only acquire second language, but also adult can acquire language for some cases. Then, understanding of language competence and performance which refer to where the input of language build a new system of knowledge, the adult acquisition emerges on it. In addition, given a brief explanation and understanding the cases in which elaborate the concept of adult acquisition, Krashen (1982) has defined

five hypothesis which give us understanding that adult can also acquire language.

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