

A Study on the Influence of Age on Learning Effectiveness of English Second Language Learners

Shuhuai Jia*

Department of Foreign Languages, Nankai University, Tianjin, 300191, China
*2010076@mail.nankai.edu.cn

ABSTRACT

The critical period hypothesis (CPH) proves a limited and specific period of language acquisition. Penfield and Roberts first supported CPH in 1959. Later, Lenneberg also supported it in late 1967 [1]. Based on the necessity of finding out the relationship between language learners' starting age and academic achievement, this paper explores the second language acquisition of 191 subjects of different ages from 7 to 9. Examinations and interviews were conducted in the study. The results show that learners of different ages have different learning characteristics, and there is a close relationship between the starting age of language learners and their English mastery ability. In other words, the language learners, whose starting age is younger, have more advantages than those whose starting age is older. At the same time, some suggestions on teaching methods are put forward for learners of different ages in order to improve teaching efficiency.

Keywords: *age factor; second language acquisition; learning strategie; Critical Period Hypothesis*

1. INTRODUCTION

As a crucial learner factor, age had been widely researched both conceptually and empirically. There were plenty of classical models for learners' age. Lenneberg (1967)'s "critical period hypothesis" defines the range of 2-12 years old [2]. When the human brain reaches puberty, the lateralization of language has been completed. This hypothesis makes two related predictions for second language acquisition. First, people must learn oral English before the lateral completion of brain language function. Second, after the critical period, the speed of language learning will gradually decline.

According to Larwen-Freeman (1991), he also agreed with the theory [3]. At first he explained from the perspective of nerves. Firstly, with the gradual maturity of people's development, both sides of the human brain are "endowed" with different functions. Secondly, the ability to acquire a second language will also decline with the loss of neuroelasticity. It can be concluded that the plasticity of the human brain gradually decreases or disappears with age. Then he explained from cognitive theory. Children's cognitive level is still in the stage of development and immaturity [4]. Therefore, in the process of language acquisition, children will be less affected by feelings and other factors. When children are about eleven years old, this makes perceptual cognition

begin to transition from concrete thinking to abstract thinking [5]. The development of language ability lags behind the development of cognitive ability, which is roughly synchronized. For adults, their logical ability and analytical ability play an important dominant role in the process of second language acquisition [6]. When they acquire a second language, their cognitive ability has developed to a certain extent. Therefore, when mastering language knowledge and applying the language knowledge learned, adults have many advantages in language accuracy, logic and so on [7]. Because adults' cognitive ability and language development are not carried out at the same time, and thinking ability is separated from language ability, they encounter some difficulties in the process of language acquisition [8]. In terms of input, children's second language learners will receive better input than adults. Thus, it will provide a lot of materials for children's learners when learning syntax [9]. At the same time, children's learners are also better at using their mother tongue to communicate and communicate with their peers. Through smooth and spontaneous communication, they can better practice some phonetics, so as to make the second language more fluent and authentic. In the end, he explained from the perspective of social psychology. There are great differences between adults and children [10]. In some cases, adults may deliberately speak a certain form of

language to highlight their identity, status and so on [11]. Therefore, they are likely to resist society to some extent, which is exactly the difference between learning language and children.

As opponents of the critical period hypothesis of second language acquisition, Krashen et al. (1985) use their research results to illustrate that children and adult second language learners have similar learning difficulties in English grammar [12]. They believe that there is a short-term accelerated stage of language learning after puberty, especially in syntax and language morphology. The data show that in the long run, this advantage is not significant in pre adolescent children, so the critical period hypothesis does not exist [13]. Krashen (1985) and Scarcell (1979) even believe that adults acquire language faster than children, and older children acquire language faster than children [14].

In the process of studying the relationship between age and second language acquisition, there have been a batch of very novel experiments [15]. At the beginning, in terms of the age effect of grammar acquisition, Patkowski (1980) first proposed the existence of the critical period of grammar acquisition through experiments. After studying 67 immigrants of different ages and backgrounds who have studied English in the United States for more than five years, he found that learners who immigrated to the United States before the age of 15 can master syntax more skillfully than those who immigrated to the United States after the age of 15 [16]. The younger you arrive in the United States, the better you perform in syntactic acquisition. The best acquisition age is from 12 to 15 years old (i.e. before puberty). After the age of 15, the ability to acquire syntax begins to decline [17].

After that, Johnson and Newport (1989) used the grammar judgment task to study the mastery of English grammar by 46 Chinese and Koreans in a second language environment (from 3 to 39 years old, immigrating to the United States, living in the United States for more than 3 years and learning English for more than 5 years) [18]. The results showed that there was a negative correlation between the subjects' mastery of grammar and their age of arrival: the subjects who immigrated to the United States at the age of 3 to 7 had no difference between their grades and the mother tongue group. The English level of the 8 to 16-year-old group decreased with age. This linear decline began at the age of 7 and ended at the age of 15 to 17, that is, the subjects who immigrated to the United States after the age of 17, their language level was much worse than that of other age groups, and their grammatical performance was not directly related to age [19]. There is a certain critical age in second language grammar learning, and 7 years old may be the key turning point. Because the researchers controlled the subjects' living time in the United States and proved that the living time had no significant effect

on second language learning achievement, the research conclusion became the best evidence to support the "critical period hypothesis" in the field of second language acquisition [20]. In 1991, the two scholars compared two groups of Chinese who came to live and learn English in the United States as adults and between the ages of 4 and 16. The results showed that the younger the initial age of learning a second language, the less affected by the grammar of their mother tongue [21]. If you begin to learn a second language after adulthood, you will be greatly affected by the grammar of your mother tongue and it is difficult to master the grammar of your second language [22]. Later, Johnson repeated his experiment with Newport in 1989 and got the same results. The experiment found that the decline in second language acquisition began at the age of 7, rather than Lenneberg's so-called 10 to 12-year-old adolescence, which shows that even if the critical period exists, age is controversial [23].

In another group of experiments, Snow and Honefnagle-Hohle (1978) studied the performance of three groups of subjects whose mother tongue is English in acquiring Dutch in the natural environment after 10 months. The results showed that the youth group (12 to 15 years old) made the fastest progress in learning Dutch in the first few months, and the adult group (over 15 years old) maintained obvious advantages in understanding and mastering morphology and syntax [24]. On the whole, teenagers learn best, followed by adults and children. In 1978, snow and hoefnagle Hohl followed three groups of people, children, teenagers and adults, whose mother tongue was English, to learn Dutch in the Netherlands for ten months. Then, the result is as follows: after these three groups have lived in the Netherlands for three months, teenagers are the best, adults are the second, and children are the worst in terms of vocabulary and syntax. But ten months later, Child Learners caught up with adolescent and adult learners in various tests. Conclusion: at first, adults have certain advantages in acquisition speed, especially in syntax and grammar. Children have more advantages in acquiring the grammatical ability of their mother tongue. Learning grammar is faster than learning pronunciation. Adults lag behind children in both pronunciation and syntax [25].

Linguist Oyama (1976) surveyed 60 Italians of different ages who came to the United States. At the same time, it is concluded that the language ability of learners who come to the United States before the age of 12 is closer to that of Americans, which has no inevitable relationship with the length of time they live in the United States. Oyama (1976) surveyed 60 Italian male immigrants who arrived in the United States between the ages of 6 and 20 and lived in the United States for 5 to 18 years. She asked the respondents to complete some tasks of reading aloud and talking freely, then extracted 45 second audio clips respectively, and asked two adult native English speakers to judge their idiomaticity. The

results showed that only those who arrived in the United States before the age of 12 spoke with an American accent. Young immigrants mastered the same pronunciation as native speakers, but the length of residence in the United States had no effect on the accent. This example fully shows that learners' age is related to the accuracy of second language pronunciation, and once again confirms that the best period of language acquisition is before the age of 13. Oyama (1976) found that when learning pronunciation in a natural language environment, the younger the better [26].

In order to verify the research conclusions of Johnson and Newport's (1989) classic experiment, Birdsong and Molis (1992) copied the experiment. Except that the subjects are different from Johnson and Newport's research, other parts such as experimental materials and experimental methods are exactly the same [27]. However, their conclusions are quite different from the original results. Among the 32 older immigrant learners, the accuracy rate of 13 in the same grammar judgment test was more than 92%, while the original result was only 1/23. In addition, the age of second language acquisition from 3 to 15 years old is not related to grammar achievement. This led Birdsong and Molis to find evidence to overturn the critical period hypothesis, negating Johnson and Newport's (1989) research. They speculate that some abiotic mechanisms limit or promote the final level of learners, not just age. Therefore, Johnson and Newport's research can not provide strong evidence for the existence of critical period, and it is inappropriate to only take age as the determinant of the second language final level [28].

Birdsong (1992) later refuted the existence of the critical period of second language acquisition through a series of studies. Taking syntactic judgment as the experimental material, he tested 20 French learners with English as their native language. The results show that the grammatical judgment ability of five adults who started late is no less than that of native speakers, which indicates that the critical period does not play a role in these people. Individuals who start learning a second language after puberty are still likely to reach the same level of syntax as native speakers of the target language [29]. In 1999, he conducted another study with 20 adult French learners whose mother tongue is English as subjects. It was found that 15 people's grammar judgment task scores were within the normal range of French nationals, and the other five people only slightly deviated from the normal range [30].

To sum up, although there are a lot of theories and experiments to support the research on the relationship between age and second language acquisition, the conclusions of many previous experiments are not unified. Some of these experimental conclusions are affected by the randomness of the experimental objects, and some are limited by the experimental methods,

resulting in the opposite conclusion [31]. However, through these experimental results, we can also compare the analysis of children's and adults' second language acquisition. Firstly, in speech acquisition, compared with adults, children and teenagers have better advantages in speech acquisition [32]. In physiology, they have their own uniqueness. The younger they are, the more malleable the brain is [33]. Secondly, adults have more advantages in grammar acquisition, and their acquisition effect is better than that of children [34]. Finally, there is no significant difference between children and adults in English morpheme acquisition. However, adults have more advantages in learning grammar system, language vocabulary and world knowledge [35].

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1. Research Questions

At present, learning English and other second languages is very important in China. With the establishment of many multinational companies in China, the gap of foreign language talents has also been opened. Therefore, English has become a compulsory course in many primary schools in China. Students have to spend their time doing extracurricular sports in English extracurricular classes in order to improve their English grades. Then, the author has a series of questions:

1. How is age related to the performance in second language?
2. What difficulties do children of different ages encounter in learning English? How did they solve it?

The hypothesis of the study is that there is indeed a critical period for people to learn a second language. After the critical period, learners can achieve a good second language level, but the time and energy spent will be much more than the time and energy spent to achieve the same level in the critical period.

2.2. Subjects

The subjects in this case were 191 children, aged from 7 to 9 years. 191 subjects were primary school students and had been exposed to the basic knowledge of English in kindergarten.

2.3. Instruments

The tools included one exam and nine interviews. The purpose of the study is to determine the different characteristics of students of different ages in learning a second language. Whether there is a critical period of language in the process of second language acquisition.

The test data are the results of Cambridge children's English Test Band 2. Find out the specific answers of each examination part to judge teenagers' English ability.

There are 3 questions in the interview and 9 children who take part in the examination are asked to complete it. The questions in the interview mainly focus on three aspects: difficulties in learning English, countermeasures for difficulties in learning English and ways of learning English. The results of interviews will show the differences among children in learning a second language.

2.4. Data Collection

The content and process of data collection and interview in the examination. Some specific procedures and methods are introduced.

2.4.1. Data Collection of the Examination

2.4.1.1. Analyzing an Examination

The data in the part are the scores of Cambridge children's English Test Band 2. The average age of the students is 8. The exam paper is made up of 11 parts, that is Sound discrimination (9.09%), Listening and choose (4.55%), Listen and fill in the blanks (10.91%), Listen and order these sentences (7.27%), Look and read (4.55%), Write the correct words (18.18%), Filling the blanks with the prepositions (4.55%), Choose the correct answer (13.64%), Conjunctions form sentences (9.09%), Look, read and fill in the blanks (9.09%) and Rewrite the sentence after the example (9.09%).

The first part of Cambridge children's English Test Band 2 is Sound discrimination (9.09%). This question is

ten multiple-choice questions, each with two options. This question focuses on the difference between the pronunciation of similar words. The second part of Cambridge children's English Test Band 2 is Listen and choose (4.55%). This question is five multiple-choice questions, each with three options. This question focuses on children's ability to understand articles in listening. The third part is Listen and fill in the blanks (10.91%). This question is a listening passage. There are 12 blanks in it. The fourth part is Listen and order these sentences (7.27%). The problem is to ask children to arrange nine sentences in normal order. The fifth part is Look and read (4.55%). This question is based on the content of five sentences, corresponding to five of the six pictures. The sixth part is Write the correct words (18.18%). This problem is to change words into specified forms according to examples. The seventh part is Filling the blanks with the prepositions (4.55%). This question examines children's mastery of prepositions. The eighth part is Choose the correct answer (13.64%). This question has 15 multiple-choice questions, each with four options. The ninth part is Conjunctions form sentences (9.09%). This question is to ask children to put five sentences in the correct order. The tenth part is Look, read and fill in the blanks (9.09%). The problem is to ask children to fill in the blanks of each sentence according to the picture. The eleventh part is Rewrite the sentence after the example (9.09%). This question is for children to rewrite the sentences according to the example sentences. The proportion of each part in the exam is tabulated. See Table 1. for details.

Table 1. Proportion of different parts in the examination

Part	Proportion
Sound discrimination	9.09%
Listening and choose	4.55%
Listen and fill in the blanks	10.91%
Listen and order these sentences	7.27%
Look and read	4.55%
Write the correct words	18.18%
Filling the blanks with the prepositions	4.55%
Choose the correct answer	13.64%
Conjunctions form sentences	9.09%
Look,read and fill in the blanks	9.09%
Rewrite the sentence after the example	9.09%

2.4.1.2. Deal with the Data

The data of the study were the scores of Cambridge

children's English Test Band 2. The average age of the students in the exam is 8. The author then grouped these students according to their initial age of learning English. See Table 2. for details.

Table 2. Statistics on the age of starting to learn English

Starting age	Number
3	27
4	89
5	57
6	18

Among the 191 students, about 27 began to study English at the age of 3; about 89 began at the age of 4; about 57 students were at the age of 5; and there were about 18 students at the age of 6. We can see the range of the age of the subjects was 3-6 and the average starting age of all the subjects in this examination was 4.35 years,

which was very young.

The results of the students in the exam are grouped according to different beginning age of first learning English in Table 3.

Table 3. Average score of each group in different parts of the examination (1)

English starting age	Sound discrimination scores	Listening and choose scores	Listen and fill in the blanks scores
3	7.38	4.13	10.18
4	8.63	2.10	6.66
5	8.38	3.49	8.75
6	7.44	2.96	8.67

Table 3. Average score of each group in different parts of the examination (2)

English starting age	Listen and order these sentences scores	Look and read scores	Write the correct words scores
3	6.50	3.13	18.32
4	6.30	4.71	15.40
5	5.92	3.16	15.20
6	6.43	4.41	14.65

Table 3. Average score of each group in different parts of the examination (3)

English starting age	Filling the blanks with the prepositions scores	Choose the correct answer scores	Conjunctions form sentences scores
3	3.92	12.67	8.92
4	4.22	13.09	9.39
5	4.23	12.38	8.31
6	3.69	12.29	8.57

Table 3. Average score of each group in different parts of the examination (4)

English starting age	Look, read and fill in the blanks scores	Rewrite the sentence after the example scores	Total scores
3	8.71	8.35	92.21
4	8.74	8.21	87.45
5	9.50	7.89	87.21
6	8.57	8.03	85.71

2.4.2. Data Collection of the Interviews

In the interview, the author interviewed nine children, all of whom took Cambridge children's English Test Band

2. Their ages are 7, 8 and 9.

The first group consists of three 7-year-old children. The second group is three 8-year-old children. The third group are three children aged 9. See Table 4. for details.

Table 4. Statistical results of interviews (1)

	Difficulties in learning English	Countermeasures for difficulties in learning English	Ways of learning English
7-year-old child A	writing English compositions	keeping a diary in English every day	listening to English for 10 to 30 minutes every day
7-year-old child B	reciting English words	reciting words in combination with pictures or movies	watching English movies every day
7-year-old child C	having no interest in learning English	learning English in games	adhering to the interaction with foreign teachers every week

Table 4. Statistical results of interviews (2)

	Difficulties in learning English	Countermeasures for difficulties in learning English	Ways of learning English
8-year-old child A	speaking fluent English	communicating with foreign friends through the software on the mobile phone	reciting 20 English words and dictating English words every day
8-year-old child B	easy to forget previous knowledge	reviewing notes every day	summing up mistakes
8-year-old child C	learning English is too difficult	reducing the difficulty of learning appropriately	making a plan to complete it step by step

Table 4. Statistical results of interviews (3)

	Difficulties in learning English	Counter-measures for difficulties in learning English	Ways of learning English
9-year-old child A	English grammar	doing five pages of English grammar questions every day	forming a group with other students to urge each other to learn English
9-year-old child B	poor English pronunciation	reading the article after the English tape	listening to English radio every day
9-year-old child C	dare not communicate with foreigners	building confidence	Communicating with foreigners

2.5. Summary

Research objects, tools and data collection. The subjects were 191 primary school students aged 7-9. The author conducted examinations and interviews in the study. The test adopts the results of Cambridge children's English Test Band 2. Listen to and fill in the blanks (11.09%), listen to and fill in the blanks with correct words (11.9%), choose and fill in the blanks according to

the examples (11.09%), listen and fill in the blanks (4.9%), correct sentences (11.09%), and then look at and fill in the blanks (4.9%).

The relationship between their starting age and their scores was found. In the study, the subjects were interviewed. The subjects were 9 primary school students who took the Cambridge children's English Test Band 2. Through interviews, this paper compares the difficulties and Countermeasures of children of different ages in

learning English, as well as their daily habits of learning English.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is about the results and discussion towards the data collection in last chapter. This chapter will look at the results of the examination and the interviews. It will also analyze the data and results. After that, the author tries to make some discussions about the study.

3.1. Results and Analysis of the Study

3.1.1. Results and Analysis of the Examination

Table 3. shows the different average scores of students with different starting ages. In the table, the total scores from high to low is: 3, 4, 5, and 6. Among this groups, the 3-year-old group was the first whose average score is 92.21. The 4-year-old group got the second with the average score 87.45 and the 5-year-old group is a little lower, which scores averagely 87.21. It is clear that the 6-year-old group was the last one whose average score is 85.71.

Can we say learning English earlier is better? It is not exact now. That is because that there are different results in different parts. These results are not significant similar to this total scores. In other words, different parts of English are not influenced by different ages in the same way.

From the analysis of various types of questions, the earlier you learn, the higher your score. However, the score difference between each age group is sometimes not so obvious.

In Sound discrimination part, the 4-year-old group ranked first, with an average score of 8.63. The performance of the 5-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 8.38. The 6-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 7.44. The 3-year-old group was last, with an average score of 7.38. Through the ranking in this part, we can not draw the conclusion that the earlier we learn English, the higher the score.

In Listening and choose part, the 3-year-old group ranked first, with an average score of 4.13. The score of 5-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 3.49. The 6-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 2.96. The 4-year-old group was last, with an average score of 2.10.

In Listen and fill in the blanks part, the 3-year-old group ranked first with an average score of 10.18. The score of the 5-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 8.75. The 6-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 2.96. The 4-year-old group ranked last, with an average score of 6.66.

In Listen and order these sentences part, the 3-year-old group ranked first with an average score of 6.50. The score of the 6-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 6.43. The 4-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 6.30. The 5-year-old group was last, with an average score of 5.92.

In Look and read part, the 4-year-old group ranked first with an average score of 4.71. The score of the 6-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 4.41. The 5-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 3.16. The 3-year-old group was last, with an average score of 3.13.

However, the Write the correct words showed a rather different result.

In this part, the scores were higher if children started to learn at an early age. The 3-year-old group ranked first with an average score of 18.32. The score of the 4-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 15.40. The 5-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 15.20. The 6-year-old group ranked last, with an average score of 14.65.

In Filling the blanks with the prepositions part, the 5-year-old group ranked first with an average score of 4.23. The score of the 4-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 4.22. The 3-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 3.92. The 6-year-old group was last, with an average score of 3.69.

In Choose the correct answer part, the 4-year-old group ranked first with an average score of 13.09. The score of the 3-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 12.67. The 5-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 12.38. The 6-year-old group ranked last, with an average score of 12.29.

In Conjunctions form sentences part, the 4-year-old group ranked first with an average score of 9.39. The score of the 3-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 8.92. The 6-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 8.57. The 5-year-old group ranked last, with an average score of 8.31.

In Look,read and fill in the blanks part, the 5-year-old group ranked first with an average score of 9.50. The score of the 4-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 8.74. The 3-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 8.71. The 6-year-old group was last, with an average score of 8.57.

In Rewrite the sentence after the example part, the 3-year-old group ranked first with an average score of 8.35. The score of the 4-year-old group was lower, with an average score of 8.21. The 6-year-old group ranked third, with an average score of 8.03. The 5-year-old group was last, with an average score of 7.89.

After analyzing these, the author made Pearson correlation. See Table 5. for specific results.

Table 5. Pearson correlation (1)

	Sound discrimination scores	Listening and choose scores	Listen and fill in the blanks scores	Listen and order these sentences scores
r	-0.014	-0.319	-0.218	-0.295
p	0.986	0.681	0.782	0.705

Table 5. Pearson correlation (2)

	Look and read scores	Write the correct words scores	Filling the blanks with the prepositions scores	Choose the correct answer scores
r	0.358	-0.878	-0.338	-0.663
p	0.642	0.122	0.662	0.337

Table 5. Pearson correlation (3)

	Conjunctions form sentences scores	Look, read and fill in the blanks scores	Rewrite the sentence after the example scores	Total scores
r	-0.588	0.105	-0.819	-0.905
p	0.412	0.895	0.181	0.095

According to the Pearson correlation statistical table, it can be seen that except for Look, read and fill in the blanks, the r value of this part is positive, which proves that the later the age of learning English, the higher the score. In other parts, the earlier the age of learning English, the higher the scores.

3.1.2. Results and Analysis of the Interviews

According to the interview data, children's difficulties generally focus on English output. And children's solutions tend to suit the remedy to the case and insist on making up for their weaknesses every day. And children learn English in different ways. It can be divided into the following categories: increasing the input and output of English, adhering to and accumulating English knowledge in daily life, summarizing previous mistakes and forming groups for learning.

3.2. Discussions

In the study, we can see that the students group with a starting age of 3 did good jobs in some parts of the final exam, which includes Write the correct words. However, it is not the whole test. In Sound discrimination, Look and read, Filling the blanks with the prepositions, Choose the correct answer, Conjunctions form sentences and Look, read and fill in the blanks parts, they did not get the highest score. Therefore, when we learn a second language, we cannot say the earlier is the better. But from the data, we can say the early learning is very good for children's Write the correct words in future. Because the scores from high to low are: 3, 4, 5, 6. So learning in

childhood can be the base of further study.

And although the learners have learnt English from young, none of them can use it frequently as a native person.

According to the interviews, children's difficulties in learning English mostly lie in the output of English, that is, speaking and writing. Their solution is to make up for their weaknesses every day. The way they learn English also lies in their daily persistence.

3.3. Suggestions

3.3.1. Suggestions for Children Teaching

The children's attention span is very limited, so they always want some new things or methods to keep their interest. To teach children a second language successfully, teachers need special skills and strategies. We should always pay attention to their age features and limitations. Here are some suggestions for teachers:

Encourage children to cooperate with other classmates. Students at this age must learn how to cooperate with others and they can learn much from each other and get promotion at the same time.

Allow errors and mistakes. We all make mistakes. If we cannot allow students to make mistakes, that would be our mistakes.

Try to develop a rich and stimulating environment for the children because of their age factor. They can learn better when they are active and enjoy the activities.

3.3.2. *Suggestions for Language Learners*

What should a good language learner do? The learners are independent, so good learners should understand their own advantages and disadvantages. They should try to analyze the teaching material and the suggestion from their teachers and others. On different conditions, they should adjust their learning strategies according to the environment [36].

Second, a successful learner should have some schedules for language learning. These schedules should involve the studying time table, studying content, short-term goals and long-term goals, and even the places [37]. As we all know, learning a foreign language is not an easy thing, and it cannot be mastered in a short time. Therefore, a successful learner must be a good scheduler and planner.

Meanwhile, to achieve the target, a successful learner also must have stamina [38]. They should have enough stamina to practice their plans and schedules. And in the process of learning a foreign language, there may be many frustrations and difficulties. Without the stamina, they cannot overcome the troubles and achieve the success at last.

Third, the successful learners should active. That is because language learning is active. To be a good learner, you should try your best to open your mouth and learn from others [39]. You should not just sit there and wait for the chances. It is impossible to learn well. Although there must be some mistakes in your work or your speech, it doesn't matter. Every language learner has made mistakes [40]. And this is the process for you to make progress. So don't be shy in language learning. Be brave to show yourself and you will find that it is not as difficult as you think.

If you have the stamina, be active, be good at planning, try to communicate, you would be a successful language learner.

3.4. *Summary*

This part is very important in the whole study. In this part, the author tries to analyze the data and results of the examination and the interviews. This part is the base of the conclusion and make much contribution to the next chapter. At last, the author tries to give some suggestions for the further research. In this part, the author thinks much about teaching and education. This chapter gives the teaching suggestions, which are helpful for the teachers and the parents. That is the real goal of the study.

4. CONCLUSION

According to the results of examination, test and questionnaire survey and data analysis, this paper draws a conclusion, discusses the limitations of this study, pays attention to further research, and puts forward some

suggestions for teaching according to the research conclusion.

For the critical period hypothesis and the sensitive period hypothesis, this paper analyzes the impact of age factors on second language learning, including that children do have advantages over children of other ages in second language learning. On the basis of previous studies, combined with experimental research. The following conclusions are drawn:

The test results show that there is a significant relationship between the final exam results and the age at which they begin to learn English. If subjects start learning a second language earlier, they are more likely to reach a higher second language level. Subjects with an initial age of 3 years scored the highest. It proves that there is a positive correlation between the final exam results and the age at which they begin to learn English.

According to these data, we can see that the age factor of learners is a very important aspect in the process of second language learning. Although you can learn a second language at any time, it depends on the actual situation. In order to acquire natural pronunciation and reading ability, children should learn a second language before the critical period.

According to the data, there is a lot of evidence that there is a critical period in second language learning. More importantly, there is even evidence that there is an age effect during this period and the value of early exposure to a second language.

In modern society, there are more and more foreign language learners of different ages. They all want to be a successful learner. As an English teacher, find out the relationship between age and English learning. It must be conducive to students' learning and teachers' teaching. In recent years, some people believe that "the younger the better", while others hold the opposite view.

How to suggest the age of second language learning. According to practical research, if students spend many years learning English, they will get good results. If students have learned English for several years and give up, adults have some advantages in this case.

Through the analysis of the results of examinations, tests and questionnaires, it can be concluded that the students whose starting age is 3 years old do particularly well. From a critical point of view, due to some external factors, the results of examinations and interviews are not absolutely correct. The questions in the interview are limited and may not be enough. The scores of each group are affected by many factors and aspects. Due to some physical or psychological problems, some parts may get different results.

On the relationship between age and second language learning. There are many other factors that affect learners. Therefore, other factors can be further studied, and

learners can benefit more effectively. If further research can focus on the comparison between native speakers and foreign language learners, this research will be more practical.

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