



THE DIFFERENCE IN LEARNING LANGUAGE OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS

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Abstract: *The process of learning a language differs between children and adults. Children have a natural ability to acquire language effortlessly and quickly, while adults often struggle with vocabulary and grammar. This discrepancy can be attributed to various factors such as brain development, cognitive abilities, and prior language exposure. Studies have shown that children are more adept at developing native-like pronunciation and intonation, whereas adults tend to retain an accent from their native language.*

Keywords: *Children, Adults, Learning strategies, Age differences, Cognitive development, Motivation, Socio-cultural factors, Linguistic input, Second language acquisition, Immersion programs, Teaching methods*

Introduction

Adult language learning differs significantly from that of children. While children have a natural ability to acquire language effortlessly, adults often face a range of challenges when it comes to learning a new language. Factors such as cognitive development, previous language learning experiences, and motivation play a crucial role in shaping the adult language learning process. Understanding these differences is essential for educators and learners alike in order to develop effective language learning strategies for adults. This article explores the various ways in which adult language learning diverges from that of children and offers insights into how adults can overcome these obstacles to become successful language learners.

Learning a new language is an exciting journey that opens doors to new cultures, opportunities, and experiences. However, the process of language acquisition varies between children and adults, as the way they learn and understand languages differs significantly. While children absorb languages effortlessly and naturally, adults often face challenges when attempting to grasp foreign languages. In this article, we delve into the differences in language learning between children and adults, exploring the various factors that contribute to their varying levels of proficiency and fluency. By understanding these distinctions, both language learners and educators can adopt effective strategies to enhance language acquisition for children and adults alike.

Learning a new language is a challenging endeavor for people of all ages. However, research has shown that there are distinct differences between how children and adults acquire and process a new language. This article aims to explore and understand these differences, shedding light on the various learning language approaches tailored for children and adults.



Children are known for their remarkable ability to absorb information, including language, at a rapid pace. They have a greater capacity for language acquisition due to their developing brains and the plasticity of their neural connections. Unlike adults, children learn language effortlessly, often through immersion in their environment and engaging in natural conversation. They pick up vocabulary and grammar rules through observation and imitation, gradually building their understanding and fluency over time.

In contrast, adults approach language learning with a different set of skills and motivations. While adults have the advantage of cognitive maturity and previously acquired knowledge, they may face challenges such as inhibitions, preconceived language structures, and different learning styles. Unlike young children, adults often need explanations, explicit rules, and systematic instruction to grasp the nuances of a new language. They may employ strategies like memorization, repetition, and conscious learning to build their language skills.

To cater to the unique learning needs of children and adults, language educators and programs often employ different approaches. Language programs for children typically emphasize play-based learning, songs, interactive activities, storytelling, and real-life situations to foster language acquisition in a fun and engaging way. These methods exploit children's natural curiosity and eagerness to explore their environment. By integrating language learning into real-world contexts, children can build their vocabulary and communication skills organically.

On the other hand, language programs for adults typically focus on explicit grammar instruction, vocabulary building exercises, and conversational practice. Adult learners benefit from a structured approach that allows them to understand the underlying rules of the language and apply them in their communication. They may engage in tasks that mimic daily life scenarios, allowing them to practice and reinforce their language skills in practical contexts.

Children and adults have distinct approaches to learning a new language. Children effortlessly acquire language through immersion and natural conversation, while adults benefit from explicit instruction and a structured approach. Understanding these differences can help educators tailor their language learning strategies to meet the unique needs of different learners. Whether young or old, the journey of learning a new language offers incredible opportunities for personal growth and global connectivity.

Cognitive development and socio-cultural factors play significant roles in the ability of individuals to learn and acquire language, particularly for children and adults.

For children, cognitive development is crucial as they gradually develop the necessary mental abilities required for language learning. As their cognitive abilities advance, children become better at understanding and using language. They begin to grasp grammar rules, acquire vocabulary, and develop communication skills.

However, socio-cultural factors also influence children's language acquisition. The social environment, such as family interactions and exposure to language-rich settings, greatly impacts a child's language development. For instance, children growing up in bilingual households or culturally diverse communities tend to have a higher language proficiency in multiple languages due to increased exposure and practice.

In contrast, adults may face different challenges when it comes to language learning. Their cognitive abilities are already well-developed, and they have an existing



linguistic foundation. However, socio-cultural factors can still impact adult language learning. Cultural beliefs about language learning, social pressures, and the availability of language resources and opportunities play a significant role in the success and motivation of adult language learners.

Overall, cognitive development and socio-cultural factors are important considerations for understanding the different language learning processes of children and adults. The interplay between these factors can significantly influence language acquisition and proficiency in individuals of different age groups.

Learning a new language can be a challenging task, especially for adults. Many people believe that children have an advantage when it comes to language acquisition, but is there really a difference in the way children and adults learn languages?

One major difference between children and adults when it comes to learning languages is the ability to acquire pronunciation. Studies have shown that children are able to pick up the sounds and intonation patterns of a new language more easily than adults. This is because children's brains are still developing, making it easier for them to mimic and reproduce new sounds. Adults, on the other hand, often struggle with pronunciation, as their brains are less adaptable to new phonetic patterns.

Another difference is the way in which children and adults approach language learning. Children tend to learn languages through immersion, where they are exposed to the language in their everyday environment. They observe and imitate, gradually building their vocabulary and grammar skills. Adults, on the other hand, often rely on structured language classes or self-study materials. While this approach can still be effective, adults may struggle with the lack of immersion and opportunities for practical application that children naturally have.

One factor that plays a role in language learning is motivation. Children are often motivated to learn a new language because they want to communicate with their peers or understand the world around them. This natural curiosity and desire to interact with others can greatly enhance a child's language learning experience. Adults, on the other hand, may have a variety of motivations for learning a new language, such as career advancement or personal enrichment. However, their motivation may fluctuate over time, making it more challenging to stay committed to the learning process.

While there are differences in the way children and adults learn languages, it is important to note that both groups have the potential to become proficient language learners. Children may have some advantages when it comes to pronunciation and learning through immersion, but adults can compensate for these differences through motivation, dedication, and effective learning strategies.

Language learning is a lifelong journey, and regardless of age, individuals can still develop their language skills with practice and exposure. It is also important to remember that language learning is not solely about speaking fluently; it is also about understanding cultural nuances, developing listening skills, and appreciating the beauty of different languages.

In conclusion, while the learning language abilities of children and adults may vary, what ultimately matters is a person's commitment and willingness to learn. By embracing their own unique learning style and applying effective strategies, individuals of all ages can embark on a successful language learning journey.



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