



## Early Starter Vs Late Starter in Learning English as Foreign Language

**Anggun Juwita<sup>1\*</sup>, Nadia Hawalinda Harahap<sup>2</sup>, Tri Juniati<sup>3</sup>, Vaiza Hilpina<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>Universitas Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo

\*Corresponding Author:  [anggunhalidarjuwita@gmail.com](mailto:anggunhalidarjuwita@gmail.com)

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Received:</b> February 7, 2025</p> <p><b>Revised:</b> March 22, 2025</p> <p><b>Accepted:</b> April 12, 2025</p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords:</b> acquisition of English as a second language, early childhood, adults</p>	<p>Language learning is related to the first language and to the second language. (Meilan, A:2014). The process of acquiring a second language can be influenced by natural process, social, motivation and language attitude. Moreover, language can be acquired through education and learning. It is debatable topics that age has an important role in learning language. Some initial studies found that children are in the critical period, therefore they can learn and acquire language faster. However, some initial studies found that the decline in students' memory is related to age. Age is not a measure of success in mastering a second/foreign language other than the mother tongue, as long as the person has the desire to use the foreign language or second language for integration and socialization purposes.</p> <p><b>How to Cite:</b> Juwita, A., Harahap, N. H., Juniati, T., &amp; Hilpina, V. (2025). Early Starter Vs Late Starter in Learning English as Foreign Language. <i>Indonesian Journal of Pedagogy and Research Development</i>, 1(2), 96-102.</p>

Published by:  
Media Akademi Publisher  
 [mediaakademikapublisher@gmail.com](mailto:mediaakademikapublisher@gmail.com)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Language acquisition is the process of acquiring a language with the ability to understand, to produce and to use the words in the target language. This process involves learning various skills such as syntax, phonics, and a rich vocabulary. Language is a very important tool for all humans. Through language, people can develop social skills to interact with the people around them. It begins at an early age, and that begins with the acquisition of language skills. Because without language, people cannot communicate with other people. Therefore, language learning is related to the first language and language learning is related to the second language (Sagala & Rezeki in Meilan, 2014).

Children acquire this language ability through audio or manual form, the audio can be obtained from spoken language and the manual form refers to sign language. A child's first language acquisition comes from the mother, because the first time a child is born he immediately meets his mother. And children are also closest to their mothers, starting from learning specific to non-specific things. Children can acquire a second language through the surrounding environment, such as playmates, neighbors and the school environment, such as teachers and classmates. Acquiring a foreign language at school is of course the language taught is English (Zalmansyah: 2017), because currently English is an international language and of course all humans must be able to use this language. Early childhood children can acquire English by

teachers starting to teach English vocabulary first, can teach about vocabulary that children often encounter in their surroundings, such as the names of animals, colors and vehicles that they often encounter.

Therefore, children acquire new language can be at the age of kindergarten, which is a sensitive period for a child's development and personality and at this time multiple personalities begin to emerge. Skills that are formed and developed quickly include physical development and language skills. We are currently studying early childhood and kindergarten program levels in addition to first language instruction, and English as a second language. It is assumed that children learn foreign languages faster than adults. Learning a foreign language can begin when the child has learned his first language (his mother tongue). Another thing is that in learning a language, children become one with their mother tongue and learn a foreign language. This means that children do not acquire foreign words from that language directly, but through their mother tongue. The use of the central method is a new paradigm of education and teaching in kindergarten. Currently teachers can only use conventional methods, as a result children and their learning progress are not optimal. Learning materials are interactive and concrete, placing students at the center of learning.

Technological developments have made television a very influential medium in children's language acquisition, especially in the form of various programs. One of the shows most liked related language animated films. Children's language acquisition at this age is undergoing a significant development process to be able to speak well and correctly. At the age of 1-5 years, children acquire language physically through the activities of seeing, hearing and understanding sound symbols. Therefore, television media in the form of watching films is very influential on children's language acquisition at this age, weakening significantly with subsequent language development regarding words spread in their environment (Lee, 2011). Learning these words can be done through direct interaction with children or through incidental language learning. A child's word learning is significantly affected by words scattered in his environment (Hart & Risley, 2016).

Children also have characteristics of physical and psychological development. Therefore, teachers must be able to develop children's learning characteristics that are coherent. Learning should be oriented to the needs of children. School-aged children need optimal physical and psychological development. Therefore, training schools are designed to meet these needs. Learning aims to develop skills necessary for life. Life skills development is carried out in an integrated manner, both through habituation and basic skills development. For example: storytelling skills, plant cutting skills, trash disposal skills, cleaning the floor, and getting along with other children which are beneficial for the child's survival. If language learning activities do not involve developmental factors, children will experience failure and disappointment. Child-oriented classes provide opportunities for success, not frustration. However, the team of teachers does not make things easy for all children, teachers adapt challenging learning activities for all levels of children's development. In this regard, teachers who lead learning activities must be able to develop models of interaction between different parties in the room. Teachers must be good at motivating students so that students have a strong mentality, are open, creative, sensitive and interactive in learning.

While for adult education is all forms educational process, does it matter in terms of content, level or method, whether formal or otherwise, continuation (extension) of previous education or Irwandi, second language learning for adults replacing basic education with going to school, at school colleges (universities) and universities or participate in an apprenticeship program. Kapur (2018), also adult training is a learning process systematic and sustainable who are adults with a purpose to achieve changes in knowledge, attitudes, values and skills (Larjanko, 2016). Educational characteristics of adults are showed by the fact that their learning is self-directed, better than learning learning is problem-oriented (problem-based learning) and enjoys active participation rather passive (Bryson, 2013). Adult learners like to learn in collaboration (cooperative learning) and always using own experiences.

On the other hand, as a student, adult learner in learning a second language cannot be treated as such intermediate students sitting at school. Adults grow up with a mature self-image and as active people to face a situation that prevents him from being himself. Then he knows himself

depressed and unhappy. On the other hand, this circumstance requires its necessity educational development plan for adults to learn another language. Mastering a new language has a lot in common with building character. After going through puberty, everything gets harder to do. The pace tends to be slower and hardened clay seems to dominate. That's why we often meet people who speak foreign languages with a strong local accent. There is a possibility he started reading when he was past puberty, or he studied in an environment with a strong local accent. However, this does not mean that younger children are usually as adept at mastering a new language as adults. For adults who want to learn a new language and take a place to learn it don't want to despair.

There are many benefits that adults can use to learn a new language that children no longer have. They are adults more focus than children. Adults have a tendency to recognize one unique element for longer. Meanwhile, young children's interests are more easily diverted. Moreover, adults have prepared cognitive that can help them to examine language features, cultural differences, or context. Besides that, adults have more first language competency than children. They are more mature in learning regional languages than children. The higher your first language competency, the easier it is to learn a second language. The analogy is, the more professional you are at playing tennis, the easier it will be to learn to play badminton. There are similar concepts that can be applied (Vivian: 2013)

On contrary, initial studies found that starting to learn English early has great benefits. They have unique strengths and abilities that give them an advantage when learning languages. Indeed, children's brains are more flexible when learning languages, and knowledge of their native language can be a useful foundation for learning other languages. Children are in their critical period when the learners can learn and understand easier. Learners in this age have the ability to acquire language faster than adult learners.

To find out whether early starter or late starter is better in learning language, this research was conducted.

The existing literature on language acquisition highlights the significant role of both first and second language learning in early childhood development (Sagala & Rezeki in Meilan, 2014; Zalmansyah, 2017). However, there is a noticeable gap in understanding how modern educational methods and technologies impact language acquisition in early childhood, particularly in contexts where traditional methods prevail. Additionally, while much is known about language acquisition in children and adults, there is limited research comparing the effectiveness of early versus late language learning in diverse educational settings.

The study aims to address the following research questions:

1. How do contemporary educational methods and technological tools influence early childhood language acquisition compared to traditional methods?
2. What are the relative advantages and challenges of early versus late language learning in terms of language proficiency and cognitive development?
3. How does the integration of interactive and media-based learning tools impact language acquisition outcomes for children in early educational settings?

By exploring these questions, the research seeks to provide insights into optimizing language learning strategies for both children and adults and contribute to the development of more effective educational practices.

## 2. METHODS

This research was conducted using library research methods to determine the difference between early starter and late starter in language acquisition. Collecting library materials: The first step is to search for journals, books and articles related to the research After collecting library materials, library materials are selected that are appropriate to the research topic. Evaluating Library Materials: The next step is to evaluate the quality of library materials in terms of relevance, accuracy and information value. Data Analysis: After the library materials have been selected, data analysis will be carried out to determine the difference between early onset and late onset in

language acquisition using Qualitative methods. Data Interpretation: The results of the analysis were studied in depth with the aim of achieving a more focused understanding of the differences between early starters and novices in language acquisition. (Espinosa, Linda M. 2011).

Therefore. The results of the study were based on the interpretation of the data to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the differences between early onset and late onset in language acquisition. Report preparation: The final step is to prepare a report based on the research results and conclusions that have been drawn. By using library research methods, it is hoped that research results can be obtained that are more useful. Information insight into the differences between early starters and late starters in the overall language acquisition process. O'Malley & Chamot (1990).

### 3. FINDING AND DICUSSION

Exploration and guidance are two factors that influence internal intellectual processes This can be seen from the learner's syntactic abilities in the target language. One-way induction is the process of transferring grammatical rules and structures from a target Language for students. The language of instruction used Exploration is about using the learner's native language. The share of students in language learning is still limited. This means students can register; Make use of the grammar rules of the target language.

Foreign language. Another reason is the default rules for goals. Audio may not be recorded and is difficult for language learners to record. The inquiry model uses the mother's language of instruction in teaching; In foreign languages, this method is clearly less successful with children. from The reason is, parents at that time rarely used standard rules in their mother tongue. Teaching foreign languages in simple sentences or words Formation. Usually children look for standard rules in their mother tongue in one way or another. Learn and analyze yourself or teach yourself through the induction process. Self-analysis, which has become known as self-discovery, is the essence induction process. Children who speak well because they are good listeners Memorizing second language vocabulary makes analyzing and analysis easier. Check the standard rules for your second language As explained by Krashen (2011).

The children acquire a second language through natural processes long before they speak the language Children participate in formal educational activities (understanding the concept of "here and now" with ing forms, plural forms, auxiliary words, etc. Young people's brains are inherently flexible. Certainly a unique way to buy languages. Older learners, between the ages of 8 and 12, lose the ability to hear and reproduce new things out loud. Linguists with foreign accents have long-term success. Young learners benefit from flexible ears. The lines that are still audible differentiate the sounds of the second language and also reproduce the qualities of the original language.

Adults learners in a second language learn the target language through the induction process. The difference is, adults are better prepared Because they already have prior knowledge of a second language. The inductive process as a means of self-analysis lends itself to analysis and discovery. Generalizations or rules in a language like English are learned through the process of second language acquisition. In fact, even small children can learn a second language more quickly than adults (Hoque, 2017). However, exploration is believed to speed up the language process. Study it as it will help you understand simple sentence structures. In contrast, inductive methods tend to focus on understanding complex structures. This application is very useful for students who have not yet reached the level of understanding. The subject-predicate sentence structure uses adverbs of time or adverbs of place that appear at the beginning of the sentence.

As it is stated by De Boot (2005) that age is one of the most important factors in learning language beside of attitude, motivation, intellectual and experiential learning. Adults between the ages of 22 and 23 with a uniform education (intellectual level) background, have a positive attitude towards unfamiliar languages, and do not feel that learning English is a burden. They can learn the language independently, including by watching videos and chatting with strangers and foreign students. She is highly motivated because she wants to participate with knowledge of mechanical engineering abroad, and her parents asked her to participate in a language course, so her English

proficiency is relatively high. Even though, various explanations have been proposed for this limited achievement, such as critical periods in language acquisition, socio-cultural differences, differences in motivation, and limited investment. This shows that "adults have difficulty in associative learning about the form-meaning relationships of language structures". (Ellis and Sagarra, 2010, p. 554)

However, adult as late starter in learning second language are more prepared, they have better cognitive when it comes to grammar. Adult education too a learning process, namely systematic and sustainable in adults with the intention of achieving changes in knowledge, attitudes, values and skills (Larjanko, 2016). When choosing learning materials, learning materials must be useful and appropriate to the needs, abilities and skills of adult learners, relevant to the learner's background, prioritize practical problems and those that may occur, be implemented immediately in the lives of adult learners (Burt, 2005 ). Another important thing the facilitator must do is involve adult learners in developing goals. This step is intended to help students organize and set learning goals. Learning objectives are developed based on the results of a diagnosis of learning needs, resources and possible learning obstacles.

On contrary, in term of memory, late starter have to rely on declarative memory first. The more experience they have with L2, the more they will rely on Procedural Memory (Hamrick, Lamb & Ullman: 2018) children who are 5 or 6 years old still have happy memories. Storage capacity at peak storage level. memory loss begins It occurs in children between the ages of 8 and 12 years. In other words, children's memories are as if categorized by age: under 7 years old and between 7 and 12 years old. Hurley and Doug (2012) studied students in immersion classes, it was clear that older children were starting to use their cognitive skills. Young children tend to do this when analyzing syntactic rules in a second language. Continue to improve your excellent vocabulary memory while learning a second language. This happens because children aged 7 to 12 years have difficulty remembering things. Parsing is often used to utilize acquired vocabulary. The next cause of memory loss is a second language Learning becomes more complex when students reach the age of 15 to 20 years. However, this decline in language skills is related to the language process. This is a defect and has nothing to do with memory (Bloom, Mullins, & Paternostro, 2010). Finally, Steinberg et al. Try to predict memory loss Students' strengths vary by age. The same is true for young students' cognitive abilities. Since the system is still in the development stage, a KM role may already be in place. L2 writing performance varied by grade. That's why it's so important to do this Investigate the role of KM in integrated tasks for young learners. Your test results will determine your academic and professional future. Examining the effects of cognitive limitations in different ways Creating assignments can also provide useful information to teachers through supervision. Identify students who may need additional support with certain types of assignments (Michel et al 2019).

When learning a language either as a second language or as a foreign language, the learner's internal factors really support the success of advocacy. This makes the results look more natural. Both natural learning situations Educational situations that suit the child inductively and suit the child Psychological factors when considering children over 7 years or language as both. Second and foreign languages cannot be separated from their existence. O. A. Bakare & M. A. Akinsola. 2012. Motivation and attitudes towards language. Motivation when learning and mastering a foreign or second language is revealed when students reflect on the importance of language as a means of communication. Because things like this do not happen to children aged 0 to 4 or 5 years who are vulnerable to experiencing this. Learn a language subconsciously. However, after the age of 4 or 5 years, children think about the importance of language for social purposes such as games with friends. Motivation is important here. This is different from the learning model in the classroom which tends to be planned and motivated.

Students play a very important role because they are placed in certain situations. he Receive information if you want to successfully master a language according to your own level of motivation It must be expensive. Many theories say that motivation or learning goals are necessary. When teaching a language other than your native language. The desire to be competent and integrated for intelligence is better than learning a language or a second language. foreign language for other purposes, such as looking for work.

As Staib states in Deluxan (2015) that learning for young students is a natural thing. Foreign language lessons are faster and easier than for adult students. Most adults do I am passionate about learning new languages and maintaining and improving my language skills. It can be difficult to stay motivated to learn. Adult oral activity motivation is different from that of younger students an adult learner not only motivates themselves, but you also set goals to achieve their future goals. language Another goal that adults want to achieve may be to acquire something. The On the other hand, younger students are in a more advantageous position due to the influence of their parents and family members. Teachers are aware of their students' language abilities or simply choose to do so. Skills and knowledge may be important for them in the future. (Ismail, 2016). Attitudes toward the acquisition and learning of a foreign or second language are important for success in learning a second or foreign language. Negative attitudes towards languages other than your mother tongue Memory processes may be impaired and your ability to concentrate on a conversation may be affected. So learn a lot Learning the target language fails because of the people involved. The process is less consistent. Many variations influence negative attitudes. Language learners usually come under various cultural influences. Students' personalities and social environments. This negative attitude is also the same. When students start to think about the meaning, they are influenced by the age factor. They have to learn the target language even in very difficult circumstances deviating from their natural state. The right age to recognize inner attitudes. Language acquisition and language education begins at the age of 4-5 years. Start thinking about the need for a second or foreign language, social benefits, etc.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Targeted second or foreign language learning, or second/foreign language acquisition, is successful when all involved have the same goal: communication and integration in a language other than the mother tongue. Natural levels of success tend to occur in children, but parents and friends can also have a high role in achieving success. Apart from motivating, parents can also control their child's language acquisition (this is not the case for adults learning the target language).

Because children tend to absorb language without a filter, the process of acquiring appropriate and correct language is expected to be successful.

Situations like this can also increase motivation and good language behavior, thereby allowing children to actively participate in classroom learning models that tend to require a high level of attention and concentration.

On the other hand, adults should consider language as a means of communication, even if it is not their mother tongue, and should be able to anticipate various obstacles in language acquisition and education.

If you need to immerse yourself in a foreign language environment in your home country, all unique cultural characteristics must be put aside in order to master the second/foreign language fluently. It needs to be emphasized that linguistic diversity is simply the diversity of universities that have one linguistic goal: communication, regardless of cultural differences, backgrounds, and language differences themselves.

As long as the person has the desire to use a foreign or second language for integration and socialization purposes, then the mother tongue cannot be used. Diversity is unique, but unique does not always have to be different.

#### Recommendation

For effective second or foreign language acquisition, it is crucial that all participants—whether children, parents, or adults—align with the goal of achieving effective communication and integration in the target language. In the context of children's language learning, the natural ability to absorb language without cognitive filtering often leads to successful acquisition. Therefore, fostering an environment that encourages active participation and maintains high levels of motivation is essential. Parents play a significant role in this process by motivating and guiding their children, as well as monitoring their progress.

In contrast, adults face unique challenges in language acquisition due to pre-existing linguistic frameworks and cultural influences. To overcome these obstacles, adults should approach language learning with a focus on communication rather than cultural assimilation. Immersion in a foreign language environment, even within one's home country, can be beneficial. It is important for adults to set aside cultural biases and fully engage with the new language.

Furthermore, it is essential to recognize that linguistic diversity enriches the educational experience, and the primary objective remains effective communication regardless of cultural or linguistic differences. Embracing this diversity while focusing on communication goals will enhance the language learning process and facilitate better integration and socialization.

## 5. REFERENCES

- Aggarwal, J. (2009). *Principles, Methods & Techniques Of Teaching*. India: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd, India.
- Amelia, R. (2016). Manfaat Akuisisi Bahasa Kedua Awal. *Jurnal Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris Terpadu Indonesia*, 2 (1), 19-30.
- Amelia, R. (2016). Benefits of Early Second Language Acquisition. *Indonesian Journal of Integrated English Language Teaching*, Vol 2 (1).
- Arbi, A. M. (2021). Peran Permainan terhadap Pemerolehan Bahasa Kedua. Diglosia. *Jurnal Pendidikan, Kebahasaan, Dan Kesusastraan Indonesia Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia Universitas Majalengka*, 5(2), 500-512.
- Arifin, WL (2020). Perbedaan Pemerolehan dan Pembelajaran Bahasa Kedua/Asing Orang Dewasa dan Anak-anak. *Jurnal Masalah Belajar Mengajar Bahasa Inggris*, 3 (2), 99-114.
- Burt, M., Peyton, J., & Schaetzel, K. (2008). Working with Adult English Language Learners with Limited Literacy. *CAELA Network*.
- Cook, V. (2013). *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching*. USA: Routledge.
- Espinosa, Linda M. (2011). Second Language Acquisition in Early Childhood.
- Irwandi. (2020). Second Language Learning For Adult. *Pelita Bangsa Pelestari Pancasila*. Vol 5 (1).
- Larjanko, J. (Ed.). 2016. Adult Education and Development: Skills Irwandi, Pembelajaran Bahasa Kedua untuk Orang Dewasa. *PPKN dan Hukum*, Vol. 15 (1).
- Oktarina, R. (2023). Pemerolehan bahasa Inggris untuk anak usia dini. *Edu Cendekia Jurnal Ilmiah dan Kependidikan*, Vol. 3 (1)
- O'Malley, J. M. and Chamot, A. U. 1990. *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rezeki indah, T. 2021. Children's Language Acquisition due to the Influence of Animation Film. *English Teaching and Linguistics Journal (ETLij)*.
- Risarani, S. T., Syafrudin, U., & Oktarina, R. (2023). Pemerolehan Bahasa Inggris Anak Usia Dini. *Edu Cendekia. Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan*, 3(01), 204-212.
- Rosiyana, R. (2020). Pengajaran Bahasa Dan Pemerolehan Bahasa Kedua Dalam Pembelajaran Bipa (Bahasa Indonesia Penutur Asing). *Jurnal Ilmiah KORPUS*, 4(3), 374-382.
- T. Atai & F. Shojaei. (2014). The Effect of Group Work on Speaking Ability of EFL Learners. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*.
- Wallin, J., & Cheevakumjorn, B. (2020). Belajar Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Kedua: Lebih Awal Lebih Baik. *Jurnal Masyarakat Pendidik Bahasa Inggris*, 5 (1), 1-8.
- Zhang, W. (2011). The Role of Motivation in Second Language Acquisition: A Study of Chinese EFL Learners.