

## Handouts for Language Acquisition by Jenny kuo

### Chapter 3: Age and Acquisition

#### I. Dispelling myths

##### A. Behaviorism

1. practice
2. imitation
3. sounds > words > sentences
4. listen > speaking
5. listening > speaking > reading > writing
6. No translation
7. No grammar

##### B. Cognitive and constructive research

1. Meaningfulness
2. Adults benefit from deductive presentation of grammar
3. Native language can facilitate learning a second language
4. Written form could be beneficial
5. Modified speech

#### II. Types of comparison and contrast

	Child	Adult
L1	C1	A1
L2	C2	A2

#### III. The critical period hypothesis

##### A. Neurological considerations

1. Hemispheric lateralization
  - begins around two and is completed around puberty
  - Children with brain injury up to the age of puberty are able to relocalize
  - Plasticity of the brain prior to puberty enables children to acquire native-like pronunciation
2. Biological timetables
  - a. sociobiological critical period for mammals and birds
  - b. Lower-order processes such as pronunciation are dependent on early maturing and less adaptive macroneural circuit
  - c. Higher-order language functions, such as semantic relations, are more dependent on late maturing neural circuits
3. Right-hemispheric participation

4. Anthropological evidence

Adults can acquire second languages perfectly

IV. The significance of accent

V. Cognitive considerations

A. Formal operation

1. sensorimotor stage (birth to two)
2. preoperational stage ( 2-7)
3. operational stage (7-16)
  - concrete operational stage (7-11)
  - formal operational stage (11-16)

B. Consciousness

C. Lateralization

D. Equilibration

A. Meaningfulness

IV. Affective considerations--empathy, self-esteem, extroversion, inhibition, imitation, anxiety, attitudes, egocentricity

A. language ego

The child's ego is dynamic and growing and flexible through the age of puberty.

Mature adults manifest a number of inhibitions.

B. Attitudes

Very young children are not developed enough cognitively enough to possess attitudes.

C. Peer pressure

Adults tend to tolerate linguistic differences more than children.

V. Linguistic considerations

A. Bilingualism

1. coordinate bilinguals: two meaning systems
2. compound bilinguals: one meaning systems

B. Interference between first and second languages

1. Linguistic and cognitive processes of second language learning in young children are general similar to first language processes.
2. Adult second language learning processes are more vulnerable to the effect of the first language on the second.
3. Adults learning a second language manifest some of the same types of errors found in children's L1 acquisition.
4. L1 may be more readily used to bridge gaps that the adult learner cannot fill by generalization within the second language.

C. Order of acquisition

Common order of acquisition among children of several native language background and similar to the found in L1 children.

## VI. Issues in first language acquisition

1. Competence and performance
2. Comprehension and production
3. Nature or nurture?
4. Universals (UG)
5. Systematicity and variability
6. Language and thought
7. Imitation— Adults are good at surface imitation.  
Children are good at deep imitation.
8. Practice --meaningfulness
9. Input
10. Discourse

## VII .The Audiolingual Method