

University of Windsor

Scholarship at UWindsor

Major Papers

Theses, Dissertations, and Major Papers

January 2020

The Influence of Family on Children's Second Language Learning

Yahan Zhou

zhou15z@uwindsor.ca

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/major-papers>



Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Zhou, Yahan, "The Influence of Family on Children's Second Language Learning" (2020). *Major Papers*. 112.

<https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/major-papers/112>

This Major Research Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, and Major Papers at Scholarship at UWindsor. It has been accepted for inclusion in Major Papers by an authorized administrator of Scholarship at UWindsor. For more information, please contact scholarship@uwindsor.ca.

THE INFLUENCE OF FAMILY ON CHILDREN'S SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

by

Yahan Zhou

A Major Research Paper
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Faculty of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Education at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

© 2019 Yahan Zhou

The Influence of Family on Children's Second Language Learning

by

Yahan Zhou

APPROVED BY:

K. Smith

Faculty of Education

Z. Zhang, Advisor

Faculty of Education

December 11, 2019

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby certify that I am the sole author of this thesis and that no part of this thesis has been published or submitted for publication.

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, my thesis does not infringe upon anyone's copyright nor violate any proprietary rights and that any ideas, techniques, quotations, or any other material from the work of other people included in my thesis, published or otherwise, are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices. Furthermore, to the extent that I have included copyrighted material that surpasses the bounds of fair dealing within the meaning of the Canada Copyright Act, I certify that I have obtained a written permission from the copyright owner(s) to include such material(s) in my thesis and have included copies of such copyright clearances to my appendix.

I declare that this is a true copy of my thesis, including any final revisions, as approved by my thesis committee and the Graduate Studies office, and that this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution.

ABSTRACT

This major paper talks about the influence of family on foreign language learning of children. Families in different countries, regions, and cultural background have different attitudes and views towards learning a foreign language and may hold unique opinions on the ways and methods of learning foreign languages. This paper introduces the current situation of children learning a foreign language in different countries, at different ages, and discusses whether children's learning a foreign language is deeply influenced by their families. The paper also attempts the analysis from various perspectives, including the attitudes of the parents towards second language learning, the social-economic status of parents, and the educational background and cultural influence of parents. It explores the relationship between the Critical Period Hypothesis and foreign language learning and provides recommendations about how to learn foreign language effectively. Moreover, in this study, it was found out the family environment indeed affect the foreign language learning of children, and provide recommendation from three groups of people: children, parents and teachers

Keywords: parents, family environment, second language learning, foreign language learning, children, critical period hypothesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
Background	1
Research Question	5
Significance of the Study	6
Organization of the Study	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	
Parents' Point of View on Children's Second Language Learning	10
Parents' Social-Economic Status on Children's Second Languages Learning	13
Parents' Education Background on Children's Second Languages Learning	15
Parents' Cultural Influence on Children's Second Languages Learning	18
Critical Period Hypothesis	21
Recommendations	27
Conclusions and Implications	36
REFERENCES	39
VITA AUCTORIS	48

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Languages are everywhere in our life; language is the voice that conveys information from people to people for sharing information; language is the most important communication tool for human beings to use. Rosaldo (1980) suggests before the specific words were invented, ancient people used sounds to communicate their needs. As words developed, oral history was an important part of preserving a civilization. According to Knapp and Seidlhofer (2011), Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish, and Arabic are the main languages of the world and the working languages of the United Nations. There are now 5,651 languages identified in the world. Among these languages, there are more than 1,400 languages that have not yet been recognized as independent languages (Knapp & Seidlhofer, 2011). There are so many different languages across the world that communicating with people in their own language becomes important. If people who work in the United Nations have the ability to speak these different languages, they can better communicate with each country in a straightforward way, which can help to promote friendly relationships between each country and develop peaceful relations with each other. This shows that languages are important to humans and everyone should be encouraged to study different languages.

Charlemagne the Great (Schmidt, 2014) said that: “To have another language is to possess a second soul” (p.155), meaning that learning a foreign language not only gives a

person a whole different and new way of thinking but most importantly, it gives the learner an insight into the culture of the people who speak it that would never have been gotten otherwise. As a native speaker of Chinese who understands a number of dialects, I have observed different local cultures of different regions in China. China has a gigantic land with abundant resources, and from the cultural perspective, the background of North and the South are quite different; thus, learning and understanding each dialect can better help Chinese citizens understand and integrate into different local cultures, and promote the harmonious coexistence of the people. According to Yang (2008), Mandarin is determined to be the national language of China, besides which there are seven major dialects spoken in some regions, and mastering a dialect is very useful for life, making friends, and travelling.

With globalization and internationalization in different walks of life, learning a foreign language, especially for young people, is often related to a person's future life. Kocaman and Kocaman (2015) suggest that in this changing world, studying foreign languages has become a necessary condition to grab hold of this new era. Students and their parents believe that there are many benefits to learning two or more foreign languages in one's life. For example, it is believed that mastering an additional language can help get more job opportunities from all over the world. Lewis (n.d.) argues that knowing two or more languages can improve one's employment prospects to some extent, for the reason that the world is changing in a flash, and progressively more

companies are doing business in dozens of countries around the world; however, if they do not hire people who have at least mastered one foreign language that have ability to communicate with their customers, these companies cannot do business well. Therefore, a job seeker who speaks a foreign language may have more opportunities than those who do not. Some people also believe that learning languages can boost people's brain function in some degrees (Lewis, n.d.). People who speak more than one language may have significantly better memory than those who speak only one language and may have better ability to solve problems and think critically. They may be more focused and do more multi-tasking. Moreover, as they age, two or more languages can also help to delay mental aging, improve memory, prolong attention, and reduce the risk of age-related cognitive decline (Lewis, n.d.). In short, the many benefits of learning a foreign language are undeniable and there is the reason why mastering a foreign language in this information world for contemporary people have popular tendency.

Although additional language can bring many benefits, parents have different opinions about whether children need to learn a foreign language and what is the best time to learn it. Parents have a unique point of view about children learning foreign languages. A large number of parents support their children learning a foreign language and support their children learning foreign languages at an early age.

According to the University of Washington (2001), babies are versatile and can hear all frequencies at the same time, so they can react to unexpected sounds. Researchers

played different sounds to babies less than a week old and found they react differently depending on the sound. Newborns like to listen to the voices of people, and they listen to their mother tongue. They react differently to foreign languages: when they hear the different sounds, the babies will have novel performances, such as stop nursing or changing the rate of nursing. Languages seem magical in that they facilitate even newborn babies interacting with adults. It can be seen that infants are more sensitive to language than adults, and their potential to learn language is also above adults. Therefore, it has been suggested that before adolescence is the best time to learn a foreign language. According to Asgari (2010), some parents support their children in learning a foreign language, while some do not. Jim is a young Chinese boy, whose parents started to teach him how to speak English when he was three years old, and whenever he encountered problems, he would go to his mother who had mastered English and was willing to help him. On the contrary, some parents do not support their children to learn a foreign language during their study period, and the reason they provide is that learning a foreign language will delay the study of other compulsory courses for children, for example, chemistry, physics, or geography, and there is no necessary for their children to learn second language. Thus, there are two groups of people who hold different opinions about whether children should learn foreign languages or not. Gardner (1985) has identified two important roles of parents which are called active role and passive role in their

children's foreign language learning process, and the attitudes of parents will become a factor influencing children's learning of a language other than their mother tongue.

It is too difficult to distinguish which people do not support or have no ability to support their children learning a second language, but we can analyze it from some aspects, such as the socio-economic status of each family. According to Butler (2014) the difference in socioeconomic status is closely related to the difference in children's second language learning outcomes. Forey, Besser and Sampson (2016) argue that the low educational background of parents may make them feel that they do not have enough knowledge to help their children learn to read and write in a foreign language and different cultural beliefs can also produce different opinions of second language learning.

In this study, second languages and foreign languages are mentioned many times, and there is distinction between them. The definition of second language in Oxford dictionary is "a language learned by a person after their native language, especially as a resident of an area where it is in general use, such as English in India" ("Second language," n.d.). Moreover, Allard, Bourdeau, and Mizoguchi (2011) mention the definition of foreign language is a language you learn because you are interested in it for whatever reason. However, in this study, second languages and foreign languages both refer to languages other than the mother language.

Research Questions

The aim of this paper is to discuss the family environment influences on a child's second language learning, by answering the following questions:

1. What are the family environmental factors that influence children's second language learning?
2. How is Critical Period Hypothesis related to children's second language learning?
3. How can parents and school help children learn a second language well?

Significance of the Study

As different groups of parents may have opposite points of view, the second language learning of children is influenced by the family environment to a great degree. With the world developing fast in these information times, and the attitude about whether children should learn foreign languages of parents have also changed with the development of the world. There are some shared beliefs about learning foreign languages, such as that parents should cooperate with the school in the process of language learning and give their children a better environment to learn new things.

There are various articles that describe how parents influence children in learning foreign languages, which will be discussed in the following chapters. Scholars have already addressed many aspects of foreign language learning, such as the point of view of a parent about whether children should learn a foreign language, the social-economic status of parents, and the educational background of parents. Also, research studies

described the cultural influence of different families. However, the literature on how to best address the parents' influence on the topic is limited. Therefore, this study discusses the existing research by analyzing the factors of parental influence and provides some practical advice for the readers.

Organization of the Paper

This paper consists of four chapters in total. The first chapter provides general ideas of the study and background knowledge about the influence of family environment on children's second language learning. The second chapter introduces some factors which may affect children learning a second language. The third chapter discusses the Critical Period Hypothesis and its relationship with foreign language learning of children; moreover, the fourth chapter provides advice for how to learn a new language well and implications for further study. Conclusions and implications and reference in the last part complete this paper.

Chapter 2: The Influence of Family on Children's Second Language

Learning

In this study, all literature sources consist of published academic articles, most of which have been published within the last 15 years.

Family plays a central role in the second language learning of children. At school, students need the greatest extent of guidance, motivation, and supervision to improve their language learning performance and compete with their peers. However, outside of school, students still need a chance to practice the second language that they learn in school. Thus, parents have a great influence on the educational accomplishments of students (Atta & Jamil, 2012). Atta and Jamil (2012) researched that in Pakistan, some parents actively participate in their children's educational activities so that they can eliminate some of the disadvantages of their children's learning. The authors say that parental involvement is highly relevant to the educational achievement of children, which means the influence of parents has a great influence on the academic success of students and helps students to further improve their foreign language learning (Atta & Jamil, 2012).

According to Kocaman and Kocaman (2015), one of the most important requirements of early foreign language education is to include the family into language education as a unit. This shows the importance of the family to the children who are going to learn a second language. Kocaman and Kocaman (2015) believe that the

effective training can only be carried out with the cooperation of schools and the beneficial environment of families because children acquire foreign languages both in and out of school. Outside the school, children can review the key points with their parents' help, avoiding forgetting this knowledge, and make children's learning outcomes more efficient. Moreover, Phillips, Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, and Crane (1998) state that parental education, parental involvement, parental interest, and the socioeconomic status of parents have an impact on student language learning achievement. The academic performance of their children is the best when parents are interested in their children's language learning activities; their children's academic performance is poor when parents are not interested in their children's language learning activities. In some families, parents are not involved in their children's study and rarely care what their children are doing or whether they are studying hard. Most children in this family environment may lack self-discipline, which will be the main reason that leads them to failure in their language learning. If children tend to watch more television during their study time, then relatively speaking, academic performance will be less. Therefore, if parents observe or participate in every activity of their children, appreciate educational activities, and reduce other activities which not related with study, they can improve children's academic performance greatly (Phillips et al., 1998).

Thus, parents should cooperate with the school to help children to effectively use the second language knowledge that they learned in school, also known as taking an "active

role.” However, some parents hold a passive point of view about children learning a second language, and some parents hold a negative opinion about foreign language learning, which is also called a “passive role”, and it will cause passive influence on children’s way of learning a second language.

Parents’ Point of View on Children’s Second Language Learning

As mentioned in the Background section, there are two attitudes of parents of whether they support their children learning second languages or not. The majority parents belong to “active role”: they are willing to let their children learn a foreign language and encourage and support their children’s language learning (Asgari, 2010). According to Xu (1999), helpful parents have the ability to provide literacy-rich environments which can better help children learn a foreign language well. According to Walczak, et al.’s (2017) evidence, about 20% and 10% of primary and secondary school students report that they have taken private foreign language classes outside of the school. The reasons parents offered are having private foreign language classes may improve their children’s reading and writing skills in a foreign language, and they want to support their children to learn a language.

Moreover, there are some parents who agree with their children learning foreign language, but they cannot help them to a great extent. For example, some parents in rural United States are farmworkers and do not have time to take care of their children’s study. Forey, Besser, and Sampson (2016) did a study in which 75.7% of parents had

experienced problems with teaching their children, such as how to form sentences in English; 70.1% of parents showed that they had difficulties in organizing English learning activities at home, and 67.1% of parents mentioned they had difficulties in choosing suitable English literacy resources for their children; in addition, 60.7% of them reported difficulties with reading English stories to their children. Forey, et al. (2016) list reasons why parents might have difficulties. In their list, the three most common reasons were a lack of time, a lack of skills and not knowing enough English. These three reasons are the top reasons why parents do not support their children learning the second language.

Nevertheless, another group of parents disagrees with their children learning a second language, and they can be called “passive role” parents. “Passive role” parents are so unwilling for their children to learn other languages that they will not provide any useful material for them to enhance their knowledge, and some also would not tutor their children. In Asgari’s (2010) study, Jamal is a child who has been living in America for seven years. He expressed that he lacks strategies to learn vocabulary and this shortage comes from his home environment. Jamal suggests that his parents did not encourage him to learn the English language; they spoke the Malay language, and at home, he usually spoke with his mother in English, but she replied in the Malay language. Jamal does not get any supports from his parents to learn new words at home. Because he lacks parental

support, Jamal studies harder than other children who have their parents' support; however, this lack of support causes Jamal too struggle to learn his target language.

In each family, not only the opinions of parents are important, but also grandparents' and siblings' because they are all members of the family. A child with a family in which all the family members support learning a foreign language may have better probability of learning well. Asgari (2010) mentions a child whose name is Jasmine. Jasmine thought learning English is as easy as learning her mother tongue because her grandfather has a significant cognizance of learning English and supported her learning. Jasmine's grandfather always provided a study schedule such as reading storybooks, newspapers, and scientific articles for Jasmine because he saw the importance of teaching her the English language. Living in this well-educated environment children can learn knowledge in the best way. Furthermore, Jasmine's grandfather had English conversation with her every day, and he taught her how to learn new words. Jasmine said that "he asked me to read articles and kid's magazines and he corrected my pronunciation. He asked me to go and check the dictionary for the meaning of a difficult word" (Asgari, 2010, p.11). Jasmine's family did not force her to learn the language; instead, they allowed and encouraged her to learn the foreign language. In this way, children will have a great interest in one language, and the children will learn one language actively. Jasmine's family environment provided her with great inspiration, making her increasingly eager to read, speak, listen and learn new words in English (Asgari, 2010).

Students with siblings are influenced by their sisters or brothers' point of view as well. Older brothers and sisters may have little effect on the use and acquisition of their mother tongue, but brothers and sisters may have a beneficial effect on the development of second language for young children to a certain extent. If siblings speak the mother language at home that will deeply influence the other children's foreign language learning. According to Bridges and Hoff (2012), in some immigrant families, for example, the immigrants from China to the United States, the first child to enroll may be the first English-speaking person in the family and may be more proficient in English than the parents. This may make a child's brother and sister become an input source to support the development of English for young children, which means the older brother or sister prefer to speak English at home all the time, and it may make the younger one imitates. Zukow-Goldring's (2002) study showed that in many cultures, older brothers and sisters are an important source of language input and they play an important role in the growth of young children.

The point of view of members of the family influences the second language learning of children. Parents should not force children to learn but encourage them to do what they are doing; just like Jasmine's grandfather did, giving her language learning assignments and having conversations with her every day, to help and support their children in foreign language learning.

Parents' Social-Economic Status on Children's Second Languages Learning

During children's growth period, especially, the early time, the socio-economic status of one's family influences their foreign language learning. Fernald, Marchman, and Weisleder (2013) state that the differences in socioeconomic status are closely related to changes in language outcomes. They argue that any people believe that there is no relationship between family socioeconomic status and children's second language learning; after all, everyone can study, no matter how poor or rich. However, some scholars show that socio-economic status has a great influence on children's learning. Ramey and Ramey (2004) state in COUNTRY when every child enters kindergarten, they will take a standardized measurement test to identify their skills and knowledge, and the result shows children from higher socio-economic status received higher marks than the children from lower socio-economic status.

Ramey and Ramey (2004) believe that the differences in these social classes are quite large, because when children enter kindergarten, those who come from underprivileged backgrounds differ significantly from their more privileged peers in spoken and other cognitive abilities. Lee and Burkam (2002) also suggest that differences between families with disadvantaged backgrounds and advantaged backgrounds indicate the success or failure of children in their future studies. Walczak et al. (2017) explain:

Firstly, household income emerges as a very strong predictor of English language achievement. The higher the household income of a learner's family, the higher the chances of the learner obtaining an A2/B1 level in the *Simce*

Inglés test. Statistical analysis shows that the odds of achieving an A2 or B1 certificate for learners from households with a medium-low income are approximately 6% higher than the odds of candidates who come from a low-income household. The odds of success increase as the household income increases. The odds for learners from households with medium-high income are around 13% higher than the odds of a low-income household, while the odds for learners from a high-income household are approximately 50% higher. This effect is statistically significant, controlling for all background and socioeconomic factors and variables related to English language instruction. (p. 57)

In short, socio-economic status can become a factor that influences children's second language learning, but it will not be the only one. This does not require that all the parents have much money for their children's language learning, but tells parents to offer as best as they can give to children for their language learning.

Parents' Education Background on Children's Second Languages Learning

The level of education of parents in a family has a major impact on children's future learning. Parents with a high level of education can largely help the knowledge learning of children. It was mentioned before that Forey, Besser, and Sampson (2016) list reasons why parents might have difficulties with their children's study, and the authors list three most common reasons: a lack of time, a lack of skills, and not knowing enough English.

Except for the first reason, the rest of the two are related to the education level of parents. Some parents have higher education, which gives them the ability to tutor their children; however, some parents have lower education backgrounds and cannot give their children correct knowledge when they tutor their children.

Forey, Besser, and Sampson's (2016) study interviews some participants who are parents and shows that because the participants felt that their level of education was not enough, they had less knowledge of foreign language. They could not use their uncertain knowledge to help young children learn a foreign language which includes reading, writing, listening and speaking. They said that this was the biggest difficulty they encountered. Forey, Besser, and Sampson (2016) provide a record of some participants:

Sometimes I am not so sure if I am right or not, so I don't want to say or teach too much. (Workshop attendee)

Grammar is especially difficult. Now I am a housewife, so I don't have many chances to use English in my daily life. That's why I dare not to teach him English when I am not sure if I am right or wrong as it may cause adverse effects. He may learn something wrong from me and then argue with his teachers. (Workshop attendee)

I can't speak English. I don't know how to teach him. (Workshop attendee)

Sometimes we do online English exercises together. I know the answers, but I don't know how to explain the rules to him. (Workshop attendee)

I am not sure about my pronunciation. I try to check the dictionary, but I still don't know how to teach him. (Workshop attendee). (p 15)

This is the disadvantage of parents with lower education background who cannot provide a good education environment for children. In Walczak et al.'s (2017) analysis, the level of education of parents is related to the children's second language learning level and the level of parental education is significantly positively correlated with the children's second language level. The higher the education level of the father or mother, the greater the chance that the second language learner will achieve the A2/B1 level (which belong to CEFR Levels) in the language test. For example, students whose fathers have a higher education have an 18% higher chance than a student who does not have a higher education father. Similarly, for mothers with higher education, the chances of achieving English higher levels for their children are about 30% higher (Walczak et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the parents who receive higher education have the ability to help their children to learn well. According to Jones (2013), if the parents of a second language learner speaks English, the chances of the learner gaining a higher level of English language proficiency are significantly higher. Jones (2013) believes that the ability of parents to communicate in English may increase children's chances of getting in touch with the language. For example, parents who can speak English may have the experience of studying or going abroad, which can enhance their children's English by travelling or

interacting with English speakers in their travels; even in their own country, they can have communication with foreign visitors. Parents are important role models for children and their ability to speak English may affect the willingness of their children to use English in daily life, which has been found to be related to improving proficiency and efficiency (Jones, 2013).

Thus, children with higher educational level parents have more advantages than the children who do not.

Parents' Cultural Influence on Children's Second Languages Learning

Different countries have unique cultures, which will lead to a diverse point of view of children learning a foreign language. According to Marques (2019), there are one hundred and ninety-five countries in the world. The attitude of parents of children learning a second language will be different because of the different cultural background of each family. Forey, Besser, and Sampson (2016) mention that people with different cultural beliefs have diverse standpoints about learning a second language. These beliefs may be in different continents, such as between Asia and North America, or in the same immense environment, such as within China, divided into rural and urban.

In a study of rural Chinese parental involvement in their children's foreign language learning, Chi and Rao (2003) found that parents believed that the responsibility of teaching children English is entirely the teacher's duty; thus, parents are rarely involved in any learning activities of their children. Moreover, another reason that rural parents are

infrequently involved in their children's language learning is that most of them do not have enough knowledge to help their children with their homework. This is because in the countryside fewer people get opportunities to acquire education as there are not enough resources for people to go to school, and in their traditional mind, they do not think that they need academic knowledge: all they need is how to do the farm work better; moreover, in many places in rural China, people prioritize men and their rights over women, so the only opportunity for going to school will be given to boys. Thus, the majority of people, especially women, cannot go to school to acquire knowledge, only recognize a few words in rural China, and some of them are illiterate, which is less helpful in their children's study.

In contrast, Gao (2006) studied twenty of upper-class Chinese students who come from urban cities and study in Hong Kong, China. During the interview session, Gao (2006) asked some questions to those students, such as "Can you tell me about your English-learning experiences on the Chinese mainland? And how are your parents attitude towards your foreign language learning?" (Gao, 2006, p. 288) The result shows that the parents of those students believe that learning English is necessary and realize that English level is related to material success and social prosperity; thus, those parents are willing to help their children learn English well. For example, they provide their children with tutoring, instill a positive attitude towards English learning, provide access to English movies and television shows, hire private English tutors, and actively report

English interest classes to children. In rural areas, because of cultural differences, these are what most parents cannot offer.

In other parts of Asia, Lee (2008) found that parents are active in supporting children's learning, but they believe that factors such as language proficiency, financial resources and available time affect their participation. In Malaysia, Boivin et al. (2014) studied the participation of parents in children's social multicultural practices and found that although most parents are interested in helping children learn English social culture, they lack the knowledge of how to help children learn English satisfactorily. The ways in which parents get involved are culturally specific (Forey, Besser & Sampson, 2016).

In Western countries, such as Canada, English is the main language, and French is a minority language; many English-speaking children learn French through so-called additional bilingualism school (Sung & Padilla, 1998), which is also called “French immersion.” Many parents want their children to master French as their second language so that they have advantage over other people who have not.

This shows each country has different national conditions, and under each national condition, parents have different attitudes about their children learning foreign languages. Even in the same country, there are many regions, and each region has its own culture. However, I suggest that whatever one culture is, each parent should support their children learning foreign language as it is a good thing that can benefit children’s whole lives.

Chapter 3: Critical Period Hypothesis

The Critical Period Hypothesis is a topic that has long been debated by linguists, and the main issue of debate is whether language acquisition ability is related to the growth of age. The Critical Period Hypothesis was originally proposed by Penfield and Roberts (1959) and later refined by Lenneberg (1967): they believe in an ideal time period for foreign language learning in a language-rich environment, after which further language acquisition becomes more difficult and laborious. Much evidence demonstrates that age is a crucial predictor for language accomplishment, that the capacity to learn language diminishes with age (Abutalebi & Clahsen, 2018) and that language learning often declines in learning outcomes with age growth (Chiswick & Miller, 2008).

According to Loup, Boustagui, Tigi, and Moselle (1994), several scholars tested the applicability of the Critical Period Hypothesis to second language acquisition, and found it as an indicator of a gradual process, meaning it was not formed suddenly. Some people made gradual progress in the second language learning at a certain age and finally reached a level change.

The Critical Period Hypothesis is considered to have an important role in the success, effectiveness, and the completeness of any language learning, whether human beings or non-humans (Alghizzi, 2014). Many people, especially parents, believe that the Critical Period Hypothesis is true for children to learn foreign languages earlier. Sylva (1997) mentions that, the language of six to eighteen – months -old infants will develop

rapidly during that time by hearing people who are surrounding them. It shows that infancy is a golden time to learn foreign languages. Therefore, many parents are willing to send their children to international school to immerse their young children who may be only a few months old in a foreign language environment.

According to the Critical Period Hypothesis, there are two different positions towards the Critical Period Hypothesis in second language learning, the first position is support. Long (1990) believed:

Within this framework researchers have proposed the maturational state hypothesis, which predicts that not only will there be differences between children and adults acquiring the first language, but also children learning the second language will find their task easier than adults. By extension, adults will fail to reach a uniform native speaker standard in different skill areas, including phonology, morphology, syntax, lexis, and pragmatic features. It may be true that adults initially out-perform children in their rate of the second language acquisition; however, children do better than adults in ultimate attainment. (p.

74)

Moreover, according to Alghizzi (2014), the Critical Theory Hypothesis is supported by the assumption that children are better at learning a second language than adults. In the study of Yamada, Takatsuka, Kotake, and Kurusu (1980), the authors surveyed the study results of 40 monosyllabic and two-syllable English words of 30 seven-year-old, nine-

year-old, and eleven-year-old Japanese students, and their learning results showed that the older the age, the lower the score. Additionally, Hyltenstam (1992) conducted a study of respondents who had immigrated to Sweden before adolescence, and these participants had lived in Sweden for more than five years. The results were compared with a Swedish native speaker control group. The final comparison shows that respondents who came to Sweden after the age of seven had a higher number of errors in grammar and vocabulary than Swedish native participants. In addition, the number of mistakes made by students who arrived in Sweden before the age of six was fewer than that of the other groups. Hyltenstam (1992) said that age plays an important and effective role in the second language learning, and the length of time that participants immerse themselves in the target language is reported as an important factor. Alghizzi (2014) also believes that the Critical Period begins on the first day of the life of a child and it lasts until adolescence. He uses the example of Isabelle, who was born of an illiterate mute mother. Because she was illegitimate, she was kept isolated in an attic for years. When she was found in the 1930s at the age of 6 and a half, she was not capable of producing standard language; however, after two years of intensive language training by specialists, she acquired fluency as good as that of other child of her age (Alghizzi, 2014). This example shows that as long as learning second language before children' adolescence period is effective.

In addition, Brown (1994) pointed out that phonological research is the largest evidence supporting the Critical Period Hypothesis because in general, children have an

advantage of mastering the accent of the target second languages as fluently as the local speakers; nevertheless, the instances of adults learning the second language are far worse than children, because the organs that adults use for pronouncing are not flexible any more.

Those examples are all showed the Critical Period Hypothesis is true, and the best time to learn foreign languages is before adolescence.

An argument against the Critical Period Hypothesis is that the older the second language learner is, the more successful they will learn. Asher and García (1969) conducted an experimental study of 96 second, fourth and eighth grade students and 37 undergraduates. In the three training units, participants listened to commands recorded in Russian, which was an experience they had never had before, and the researchers observed how they interacted with an adult speaking the Russian words in person. Half of the participants observed, while the rest were asked to mimic the speech of the model. At the end of each lesson, each participant was subjected to a separate memory test that required them to abide by the Russian commands heard during the training, as well as new commands that are recombination of the elements in the learned commands. The results showed that adults were superior to children and adolescents in language complexity. Moreover, Flege, Yeni-Komshian, and Liu (1999) mention a term “sensitive period,” which can be interchanged with the term “critical period.” Bialystok (1997) and Bialystok and Hakuta (1998) believe that the learning ability of the second language

diminishing is the consequence of normal brain maturation. However, the notion of a sensitive period implies that there will be a gradual, perhaps even linear, decline in the second language performance as age increases. Thus, the lack of a discontinuity in age of arrival of second language performance functions might be taken as evidence to be against the existence of a critical period for L2 acquisition (Flege, Yeni-Komshian, and Liu, 1999).

In addition, for people with disabilities or neurological problems, such as those who are deaf, or have Down syndrome and so on, their situations have a spectacular effect on their language learning (Alghizzi, 2014). According to DiFino and Lombardino (2008):

In persons who have dyslexia, many phonologically based skills can be affected such as manipulating sound or sound units in spoken language tasks (e.g., Pig Latin), transforming print into sounds (e.g., sounding out words), recognizing printed words automatically, repeating unfamiliar sound sequences, retrieving sounds from memory to produce words, and transforming sounds into letters (e.g., spelling words). Dyslexia is most commonly believed to be the result of a disruption in phonological processing that affects one's ability to manipulate and remember sound and letter sequences. It does not affect one's reasoning ability and individuals have normal listening comprehension skills. (p. 393)

Thus, people who have dyslexia have ability to learn foreign languages but just need to put more effort into it.

In conclusion, most of researchers support the Critical Period Hypothesis, which means the Critical Period Hypothesis has great influence on second language learning. At the same time, in a family, the attitudes of parents toward the Critical Period Hypothesis directly influence whether they support their children to start learning a second language early.

Chapter 4: Recommendations

Now that the world is becoming progressively more diversified, more people with different cultural backgrounds get together, and communication has become more important; thus, it is useful for children to master one or more foreign languages. In the following, there are some guidelines for how to effectively learn foreign languages.

Firstly, suggestions for children. When children start to learn foreign languages, they should first have some basic knowledge about grammar. Kumar and Phil (2013) believes that grammatical knowledge helps students correct mistakes and improve writing skill, which helps students learn foreign languages better to some degree. The student can accurately learn foreign languages only through the basic rules of the target language. Moreover, when correcting made in the target language, grammar is a reliable reference. Grammar is one of the most important factors in target language learning, and unfortunately, it can also be the most complicated and difficult part of a language (Kumar & Phil, 2013). Therefore, if students figure out the grammar problem, they have begun to successfully master foreign languages. Moreover, according to “How to Learn a New Language Fast” (2019), immersing oneself in a language also can help the student learn foreign languages well, such as frequently watching, listening, reading and writing in the target language every day. Many people are fluent in speaking their native language because they live in a native language environment; thus, if one wants to master a foreign language must immerse themselves in the target language environment to help them

better learn the target language. In China, there are bilingual schools which use two languages for instruction, and in Canada, there is a French immersion education system. These are not simply to teach a language but provide children with a good environment to learn the language and promote their language learning better. According to “How to Learn a New Language Fast” (2019), when students are watching movies and television series in a foreign language they are learning, they should try to avoid subtitles. Otherwise if they rely on the subtitles it will not help the listening part of the language learning. In addition, watching movies, and reading books, newspapers or magazines in the target languages is also an effective choice. Students should try to read an article in the target language every day, and then look up the words in the dictionary that they are not familiar with. They should also listen to the radio or music in the target language on the way to work or school every day (“How to Learn a New Language Fast,” 2019). Creating a good environment to learn foreign languages can assist with the learning process. Furthermore, connecting with a native speaker is another method to learn. “How to Learn a New Language Fast” (2019) also mention there is no doubt that communication is an effective method to learn foreign languages. Many times, students spend all their time learning grammar and memorizing vocabulary instead of going out and putting what they have learned into practice. Over time, they only learn so-called "dumb English," which means they can understand what people say but cannot communicate with native speakers frequently (“How to Learn a New Language Fast,”

2019). This is not to say that grammar and vocabulary are not important, but students have to combine theory and practice together, which can help them learn foreign languages more efficiently.

Secondly, recommendations for parents. In each family, parents play an important role in children's foreign language learning. Parents actively participate in the child's study and can assist their children in consolidating the knowledge they have learned after the class (King, 2012). As mentioned before, the positive attitude of parents is imperative for the foreign language learning of children; thus, parents should encourage their children to study foreign languages not only inside but also outside school. For example, parents could encourage children to use new vocabulary they have learned. According to Alqahtani (2015), learning vocabulary is a significant part of foreign language learning. Teachers often emphasize the meaning of new words, both in books and in the classroom. Vocabulary is also the core of language teaching, which means it is essential for language learners. Schmitt (2000) argues that vocabulary knowledge is often seen as an important tool for foreign language learners, as limited vocabulary can be an obstacle to the success of foreign language learning. Moreover, Nation (2001) suggests the relationship between basic vocabulary and language use as a balancing relationship, and vocabulary is the foundation of language, which is the elementary part of phrases, sentences and paragraphs. What people say is made up of vocabularies. Thus, people can see the significance of vocabulary is proven daily both inside and outside the school. Nation

(2001) claimed, in the classroom, students with excellent grades often have the largest vocabulary. Thus, it can be seen the significance of reciting vocabulary is clear, and parents need to encourage and urge their children to recite words as much as possible. In addition, the family environment is important for children learning foreign languages. According to Goldstein, Fabiano, and Washington (2005), if parents want to create a suitable learning environment for the child, they should set themselves as an example to their children because the children are in contact with classmates and teachers at the school, but the rest of the time is in contact with their parents. There is an old saying: “Children are what mothers are,” which means they are imperceptibly influenced by what they constantly see and hear. Parents should not be afraid of difficulties in front of their children when they study a foreign language, and they should actively solve the problem when they encounter difficulties. For example, when facing new vocabulary, parents should ask their children to look through the dictionary; when encountering difficult grammar exercises, parents can lead their children to solve them if they know how, or otherwise search for material with their children together to figure it out. This involves their children so that the children can learn in a subtle way.

In addition, parents should be a “good teacher” at home, which means foreign language learner’s parents should be capable of tutoring their children at home for their homework and pay more attention to it (Breiseth, Colorado, Robertson, & Lafond, 2011). However, there are some parents of foreign language learners who

are afraid of helping their children with homework, especially the parents who have a lower educational level. Thus, parents who can master the target language can communicate with their children every day by using the target language. Parents who have not master the target language can create a new target language environment for their children, such as providing learning material as much as they can, doing the best to meet all the needs of children's learning, and learning with their children together, encouraging them, and letting them learn with confidence and interest. Panferov (2010) believes that foreign languages learners' parents must be able to advocate the development of their children's education and literacy skills, which can help children learn foreign languages to the greatest extent. Moreover, parents can help their children find a reliable website that supports people from all over the world, so they can study online and have communication opportunities with native speakers whenever they want; thereby, training their oral English, and refusing to be "dumb" in English learning process.

Thirdly, instructions for schools. Schools should use different kinds of teaching methods to teach students to learn new languages. According to Kocaman and Kocaman (2015), in foreign language teaching, games can be effectively used in foreign languages learning processes. For children, learning a language accurately is an extremely complicated process. The teacher should always pay attention to teach the children's sensitivity to foreign languages, for instance, by starting with the speed and volume of the

speech and provide them with the communication tools used in daily activities. Children should be encouraged to interact with friends in the target language, and in a rich game environment, teachers can teach students in a dynamic way that can stimulate children's learning interests. While playing games, children try to imitate by observing adults to learn the pronunciation and intonation of a target language, so foreign language teaching at a young age should be taught by a teacher with a correct accent through a game activity (Kocaman & Kocaman, 2015). Moreover, Kocaman and Kocaman (2015) also mention that music can benefit foreign language learning well, as found in their research on teaching foreign languages through music:

In a group of age 5 children with the problem statement. Does education with music help embedding the information into the memory of children at this age?

Consequently, it is concluded that in pre-school, learning with music helps students to save data in their memory more easily and is more effective than the other rote classical teaching methods. (p 2)

Özkardeş (2005) suggests that, one of the advantages of using music in foreign language teaching is by singing and listening, children get their vocabulary enlarged and the development of language accelerated. In the same structure, repeating certain words helps the children identify the words and enable them to understand the words. Similarly, by singing, children can accurately pronounce certain words by repeating them.

Therefore, in language teaching, the teacher can organize age-appropriate music activities

to help children learn foreign languages well (Modiri, 2010). Furthermore, Panferov (2010) also mentions that as educators, teachers must engage parents and students with family and schools to promote and motivate students and help them enhance their learning outcomes.

Additionally, productive use of mobile applications (apps) can help students learn languages better. Mobile devices are tools that give people opportunity to learn anything everywhere whenever they have spare time from working or schooling. Now that the number of smartphones exceeds the laptops, almost everyone has a mobile phone (Steel, 2012). Therefore, students can fully use mobile applications to learn new knowledge in their spare time. Steel (2012) did a study and the result shows that,

Students found mobile apps '*easy-to-use and understand*' and '*accessible anywhere anytime*'. Students commented that apps were generally free or low cost and '*are often many things in one: dictionary, text-book type exercises, flash cards, audio, writing practice devices etc.*' Additionally, students expected apps to continue to improve and to offer more opportunities for learning. As one student said, '*there are so many apps out there that help assist me in my language learning, and there are always new apps being released.*'

(p. 3)

Obviously, mobile applications have a positive effect on learning. Steel (2012) interviewed some students about their attitude toward using mobile applications to

acquire new languages, and all of them gave feedback that have wonderful experience by using language learning mobile applications. Most of them expressed that using mobile applications to learn foreign languages is convenient and efficient. A mobile phone is equivalent to a portable device, and people can put a dictionary and learning tools on their mobile phones at any time. The student who were interviewed by Steel (2012) answered:

Phone apps can be used as dictionaries, help with verb conjugation... It's language tools whenever I need them, wherever I need them and that makes it useful to have. When I want to know what a certain word may be for a situation and I am out and about I can look it up straight away. I find I remember it better because I can remember the situation as well, so I am constantly expanding my vocabulary. (p. 4)

Mobile phones can be teaching/learning tools, as long as students use them properly. Downloading mobile language learning applications to assist in learning would be another good suggestion.

All in all, teachers and parents need to frequently exchange valuable information about home and school literacy experiences. Only when teachers and parents of foreign language learners become partners, can the children' chances to successfully develop literacy both in foreign languages and their native language be maximized (Xu, 1999). Moreover, student should use all kinds of methods everywhere and every time to learn

languages that can lead them to success. Foreign languages learning is not difficult as people thought, if students use this advice to make their language learning process a success (Steel, 2012).

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications

This paper mainly talks about how the family environment will affect children learning a foreign language. Parents play a major role in the family, which means when children are acquiring a foreign language, they may be more or less influenced by their parents which depends on the following aspects: the attitude of parents, the socio-economic status of parents, the educational level of parents, and the cultural background of parents; consequently, these factors can have a negative or positive effect on the language learning of children.

Moreover, this paper discusses the relationship between the Critical Period Hypothesis and foreign language learning, the debate regarding what age would be best for people to learn foreign language. Those who support the Critical Period Hypothesis (e.g. Sylva and Long) suggest that children's foreign language learning should start the earlier the better, while those who are against it (e.g. Asher and García) argue that adults were superior to children and adolescents in language complexity. Furthermore, suggestions for better language learning practices are given for three groups of people: children, parents and teachers. This paper aims to raise the awareness of effectively using language learning tools for students, and give teachers suggestions for using efficient learning methods to teach, so as to help students learn foreign languages successfully and confidently. It recommends some teaching methods, such as, teaching new languages

through game activities and music class, which can better assist the quality of classroom teaching.

Potential limitations exist in this study. It focuses on the general patterns in language learning while there is a great variety of influential factors. For instance, in different countries, parents may have different cultural backgrounds that influence their attitudes to their children's second language learning; however, even though there are different cultural backgrounds, there will still be some parents who have the same or similar attitudes to those of others outside of their group. Not every parent within one culture will have the same attitude. Moreover, the foreign language learning for special-needs children is only very briefly touched upon (how students with dyslexia learn a foreign language). Further study can be done to have in-depth investigations of certain communities to analyze what predominant attitude their members have towards their children's learning or foreign languages and provide more specific and practical recommendations. Moreover, further study can provide more information about details of how to learn a foreign language well by providing clear steps regarding how to develop skill in writing, reading, listening, and speaking. In addition, more materials which related with the foreign language learning for special-needs children should be introduced, and recommendations offered.

The purpose of this study is to show every parent that learning a new language is important in this diverse world. People from all over the world speak different languages

and knowing more languages can help people to communicate and share information better. As the diversity of the world increases, people who are bilingual or multilingual have additional assets when they seek employment with companies that require knowledge of foreign languages. Those, who want to get education in another country often need to study the language of instruction. Thus, mastering foreign languages becomes more popular and useful than before. What parents should do is to support their children' language study within their power, for example, affording mobile phone to children as a study tool and providing language learning materials, such as target language newspaper and learning website.

To learn foreign languages well, not only do children need to put effort in, but also the cooperation of parents and school is necessary. As long as children are using all the materials provided by parents and teachers effectively, including tools like mobile applications, they will learn foreign languages successfully.

REFERENCES

- Abutalebi, J., & Clahsen, H. (2018). Critical periods for language acquisition: New insights with particular reference to bilingualism research. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 21(5), 883-885. doi: 10.1017/S1366728918001025
- Alghizzi, T. M. (2014). Critical period hypothesis. *Language in India*, 14(1), 15-22. Retrieved from <http://languageinindia.com/may2013/pradeepgrammarfinal.pdf>
- Allard, D., Bourdeau, J., & Mizoguchi, R. (2011). Addressing cross-linguistic influence and related cultural factors using Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). In E. G. Blanchard & D. Allard (Eds.), *Handbook of research on culturally aware information technology: Perspectives and models* (pp. 582-598) Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference. doi:10.4018/978-1-61520-883-8.ch027
- Alqahtani, M. (2015). The importance of vocabulary in language learning and how to be taught, *International Institute of Social and Economic Sciences*, 3(3), 21-34. Retrieved from <https://ideas.repec.org/a/sek/jijote/v3y2015i3p21-34.html>
- Asgari, A. (2010). The influence of informal language learning environment (parents and home environment) on the vocabulary learning strategies. *English Language and Literature Studies*, 1(1). doi:10.5539/ells.v1n1p7
- Asher, J.J., & García, R. (1969). The optimal age to learn a foreign language. *The Modern Language Journal*, 53(5), 334-341. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1969.tb04603.x>

- Atta, M. A., & Jamil, A. (2012). Effects of motivation and parental influence on the educational attainments of students at secondary level. *Academic Research International*, 2(3), 427-431. Retrieved from [http://www.savap.org.pk/journals/ARInt./Vol.2\(3\)/2012\(2.3-52\).pdf](http://www.savap.org.pk/journals/ARInt./Vol.2(3)/2012(2.3-52).pdf)
- Bialystok, E. (1997). The structure of age: In search of barriers to second language acquisition. *Second Language Research*, 13(2), 116–137. <https://doi.org/10.1191/026765897677670241>
- Bialystok, E., & Hakuta, K. (1998). Confounded age: Linguistic and cognitive factors in age differences for second language acquisition. In D. P. Birdsong (Ed.), *New perspectives on the critical period hypothesis for second language acquisition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Boivin, N., Albakri, R. N., Yunus, Z. B. M., Mohammed, H., & Munlandy, N. (2014). Assessing emergent social and multiliteracy practices in urban Malaysian homes. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research*, 10(2), 34-54. Retrieved from <https://journals.melta.org.my/index.php/majer/article/view/128/43>
- Breiseth, L., Colorado, C., Robertson, K., & Lafond, S. (2011). *A guide for engaging ELL Families: Twenty strategies for school leaders*. Retrieved from https://www.colorincolorado.org/sites/default/files/Engaging_ELL_Families_FINAL.pdf
- Bridges, K., & Hoff, E. (2012). Older sibling influences on the language environment and

language development of toddlers in bilingual homes. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 35(2014), 225-241. doi: 10.1017/S0142716412000379

Brown, H. D. (1994). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Prentice Hall.

Butler, Y. G. (2014). Parental factors and early English education as a foreign language: a case study in mainland China. *Research Papers in Education*, 29(4), 410-437. doi:10.1080/02671522.2013.776625

Chi, J., & Rao, N. (2003). Parental beliefs about school learning and children's educational attainment: Evidence from rural China. *Ethos*, 31(3), 330-356. <https://doi.org/10.1525/eth.2003.31.3.330>

Chiswick, B. R. & Miller, P. W. (2008). A test of the critical period hypothesis for language learning. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 29(1), 16-29. doi: 10.2167/jmmd555

DiFino, S. M., & Lombardino, L. J. (2008). Language learning disabilities: The ultimate foreign language challenge. *Foreign Language Annals*, 37(3), 390-400. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2004.tb02697.x>

Fernald, A., Marchman, V. A., & Weisleder, A. (2013). SES differences in language processing skill and vocabulary are evident at 18 months. *Developmental Science*, 16(2), 234-248. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/desc.12019>

- Flege, J. E., Yeni-Komshian, G. H., & Liu, S. (1999). Age constraints on second-language acquisition. *Journal of Memory and Language*, *41*(1), 78–104.
<https://doi.org/10.1006/jmla.1999.2638>
- Forey, G., Besser, S., & Sampson, N. (2016). Parental involvement in foreign language learning: The case of Hong Kong. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *16*(3) 383–413. <https://doi.org/10.1177.1468798415587469>
- Gao, X. (2006). Strategies used by Chinese parents to support English language learning: Voices of ‘Elite’ university students. *RELC Journal*, *37*(3): 285–298.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688206071302>
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitudes and Motivation*. London, UK: Edward Arnold.
- Goldstein, B. A., Fabiano, L., & Washington, P. S. (2005). Phonological skills in predominantly English-speaking, predominantly Spanish-speaking, and Spanish English bilingual children. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, *36*(3). [https://doi.org/10.1044/0161-1461\(2005/021\)](https://doi.org/10.1044/0161-1461(2005/021))
- How to Learn a New Language Fast. (2019). Retrieved from
<https://www.wikihow.com/Learn-a-New-Language-Fast>
- Hyltenstam, K. (1992) Non-native features of near-native speakers: on the ultimate attainment of childhood L2 learners. *Cognitive Processing in Bilinguals*, *83*(1992), 351-368. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0166-4115\(08\)61505-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0166-4115(08)61505-8)

- Jones, N. (2013). The European survey on language competences and its significance for Cambridge English language assessment. *Research Notes* 52, 2–7. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/Images/139525-research-notes-52-document.pdf>
- King, S. B. (2012). Increasing college-going rate, parent involvement, and community participation in rural communities. *The Rural Educator*, 33(2), 20-26.
<https://doi.org/10.35608/ruraled.v33i2.415>
- Knapp, k., & Seidlhofer, B. (2011). Handbook of foreign language communication and learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 33(1), 142-143.
doi:10.1017/S0272263110000653
- Kocaman, N., & Kocaman, O. (2015). Parents' views regarding foreign language teaching in pre-school institutions. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, (Special Issue for INTE 2015), 383-393. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED589196.pdf>
- Kumar, P., & Phil, M. (2013). The importance of grammar in English language teaching. *Language in India*, 13(5), 482-486. Retrieved from <http://languageinindia.com/may2013/pradeepgrammarfinal.pdf>
- Lee, V.E., & Burkam, D.T. (2002). Inequality at the starting gate: Social background differences in achievement as children begin school. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.

- Lee, Y. C. (2008). *Parental involvement and support for Taiwanese children's English language and literacy learning*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. (3318119).
- Lenneberg, E. H. (1967). *Biological foundations of language*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Lewis, B. (n.d.). 12 reasons everyone should learn another language. Retrieved from <https://www.fluentin3months.com/why-learn-another-language/>
- Long, M. (1990). Maturation constraints on language development. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 12, 251-285.
- Loup, G., Boustagui, E., Tigi, M. E.I., & Moselle, M. (1994). Reexamining the critical period hypothesis: A case study of successful adult SLA in a naturalistic environment. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 16(1), 73-98.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263100012596>
- Marques, H. (2019) How Many Countries Are There in the World? Retrieved from worldatlas.com/articles/how-many-countries-are-in-the-world.html.
- Modiri, I. G. (2010). Foreign language teaching through pre-school music. *Uludağ University faculty of Education Journal*. 23(2), 505-516.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Özkardeş, O. G. (2005). Use of music in pre-school education institutions. *Current in preschool education threads* (pp.265-280). Istanbul: Morpa Cultural Publications.

- Panferov, S. (2010). Increasing ELL parental involvement in our schools: Learning from the parents. *Theory into Practice*, 49(2), 106-112.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841003626551>
- Penfield, W., & Roberts, L. (1959). *Speech and brain mechanisms*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Phillips, M., Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, G. J., Klebanov, P., & Crane, J. (1998). Family background, parenting practices, and the Black–White test score gap. In C. Jencks & M. Phillips (Eds.), *The Black–White test score gap* (pp. 103-145). Washington, DC, US: Brookings Institution Press.
- Ramey, C.T., & Ramey, S.L. (2004). Early learning and school readiness: can early intervention make a difference? *Merrill- Palmer Quarterly*, 50(4), 471–491. doi: 10.1353/mpq.2004.0034
- Rosaldo, R. (1980). Doing oral history. *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice*, (4), 89-99. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.ledproxy2.uwindsor.ca/stable/23160313>
- Schmidt, G. (2014). Personal growth as a strong element in the motivation of Australian university students to learn German. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 37(2), 145-160. <https://doi.org/10.1075/arial.37.2.04sch>
- Schmitt, N. (2000). *Vocabulary in language teaching*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Steel, C. (2012). Fitting learning into life: Language students' perspectives on benefits of using mobile apps. In M. Brown, M. Hartnett & T. Stewart (Eds.), *Future challenges, sustainable futures. Proceedings ascilite Wellington 2012*. (pp. 875-880).

Sung, H., & Padilla, A. M. (1998). Student motivation, parental attitudes, and involvement in the learning of Asian languages in elementary and secondary school. *The Modern Language Journal*, 82(2): 205–216. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1998.tb01193.x>

Sylva, K. (1997). Critical periods in childhood learning. *British Medical Bulletin*, 53(1), 185-197. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.bmb.a011599>

University of Washington. (2001, May 30). Babies have a different way of hearing the world by listening to all frequencies simultaneously. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved from www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2001/05/010529233110.htm

Walczak, A., Harrison, G., Muratorio, M., Flores, C., Brunner, S., & Docherty, C. (2017). Which factors affect English language attainment? A study of school students in Chile. *Impact of Cambridge English exams and English language learning programmers in a variety of contexts*, 65, 51-88. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Charles_Mifsud3/publication/315672806_Understanding_language_learning_in_Malta/links/58da79e745851578dfba9ee0/Understanding-language-learning-in-Malta.pdf

- Xu, S.H. (1999). Young Chinese ESL children's home literacy experiences. *Reading Horizons*, 40(1), 47-64. Retrieved from https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons
- Yamada, J., Takatsuka, S., Kotake, N., & Kurusu, K. (1980). On the optimum age for teaching foreign vocabulary to children, *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 18(3),245-247. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/openview/4c14014cee71fe12d6468386635e7154/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=1816531>
- Yang, J. (2008). English as a third language among China's ethnic minorities. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 8(6), 552-567 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050508669068>
- Zukow-Goldring, P. (2002). Sibling caregiving. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting: Being and becoming a parent* (pp. 253–286). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Yahan Zhou

PLACE OF BIRTH: Changsha, Hunan, China

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1995

EDUCATION: Changsha NO.15 High School, Hunan, China,
2010-2013

Nanyue College of Hengyang Normal University,
Hengyang, China, 2013-2017 B.A.

University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada
2018-2020 M.Ed.