SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION BEYOND CRITICAL AGE: A CASE STUDY OF AN OLD SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNER

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Abstract

This paper investigates the factors that facilitate/hinder Second Language Learning. The two factors that the study focuses on are age and motivation. Role of motivation in relation to age is discussed of a deviant case using Qualitative Paradigm, and the data is analyzed using Narrative Inquiry, Case Study and Retrospective Longitudinal design to find out if motivation plays any significant role in terms of achieving successful second language competence. It is a common belief that people who start young to learn a Second Language perform better than the old learners. However, the results indicate that this is not true in many cases, as this study on a deviant case shows that motivation plays a very important role in achieving successful Second Language Acquisition. If the learners are intrinsically motivated and are motivated from the beginning of their learning journey irrespective of their age then learning becomes easier.

Keywords: Second language acquisition, motivation, instrumental and integrative motivation, age, critical period hypothesis

Introduction

'Second Language Acquisition' (SLA) basically refers to the process of learning a second language apart from the first language. This term is misleading as Second Language Learning refers to all the languages learnt after the first language/mother tongue, be it second, third or fourth, and is not restricted to the second language only, therefore any other language apart from the first language is referred to as second language. The online Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2015)[1], defines Second Language as "a language that somebody learns to speak well and that they use for work or at school, but that is not the language they learned first". Similarly Macmillan Online Dictionary (2015)[2] explains the process of learning a second language as "the *process* by which *people learn* a *language* that is not their native language". According to Krashen[3], "We have two different ways of developing ability in another language. We can acquire language and we can learn language. Language acquisition occurs subconsciously… language learning is a conscious process" (Krashen 2013, 1).

Earlier approaches and researches in Second Language Acquisition include imitation and practice of the sounds and structures of the target language by the students, while the teachers gave feedback for reinforcement and correction where needed. After this research in the field of SLA, Contrastive Analysis' was introduced, which refers to the comparison between the L1 and the L2 of the learners. In order to avoid L1 interference and to form L2 habits Learners would use drill practices and correction on the areas of the L2 which differed from those of the L1 (Pica 2005)[4].

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[1]Oxford. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary.* 2015.
http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/second-language, (Accessed 10th October 2015).
[2]Macmillan. *Macmillan Dictionary.* 2015. http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/second-language-acquisition, (Accessed 10th October 2015).
[3]Krashen, Stephen. *Second Language Acquisition. Theory, Application and some Conjectures.*(Mexico: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
[4]Pica, Teresa. "Second Language Acquisition Research and Applied Linguistics." In *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning*, by Eli Hinkel, (New Jersey: Erlbaum Associates, 2005), 263-280.

Unfortunately, these two approaches did not work well. Additionally, Krashen (1977) presented five hypotheses in his 'Naturalistic Approach': The Acquisition- Learning Hypothesis (mentioned earlier), Natural Order Hypothesis: it claims that we acquire the rules of a language in a predictable order. Monitor Hypothesis: this monitors the learning progress and proposes improvements where needed. The Input Hypothesis: this makes sure that motivation helps learners to learn a bit beyond their understanding. The Affective Filter Hypothesis: positive attitude facilitates language learning.

After Krashen's theory, 'Communicative Language Teaching' emerged, it is learner centered as it focuses on their communicative proficiency. Teachers teach leaners how to communicate in the target language through various activities and motivation strategies. Third important and relatively new SLA theory is 'Cognitive Approach'. According to this approach learners are exposed to the target language and are expected to construct and use the language automatically.

It is important for the instructor to understand these approaches and guide their students accordingly. For the above stated approaches, it is quite essential to check the learning environment and age factor in the process of second language learning, to see whether age affects the learning process or not. Similarly, motivation is another significant factor that needs to be discussed to find out how much motivation contributes in language learning as thoroughly investigated by Gardner and Lambert (1959), as all the above stated approaches incorporated the factor of 'Motivation' for effective language learning.

Aims and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to investigate the process of language learning for old people, and to challenge CPH (Critical Period Hypothesis). Moreover, it will also explore different types and role of motivation in Second Language Learning with the aim to generate a grounded theory.

As it is observed that it is not just our younger generation who wants to learn a language, in fact old people too want to learn a second language for different reasons. This world has become a global village; old people also want to connect with the people living on the other side of the world or at times for immigration purposes, job requirement, to understand the culture of other people. For such a situation there is a need to study the learning process and to facilitate it according to their age by motivating them to learn effectively, no matter how much time they take in becoming proficient in the target language. This study will also help us understand older people and their need to keep themselves busy in learning new things especially a language.

The research questions include:

- To what extent does age matter in Second language Learning?

- What role does motivation play in Second language Learning?

- How are the factors of age and motivation interconnected in the process of Second Language Acquisition?

Literature Review

There is a significant difference in the language learning process of adults learning a second language and in the way children acquire their first language. This difference paved way for the extensive research on the concept of CPH (Critical Period Hypothesis). Initially the idea of CPH was introduced by Penfield and Roberts in 1959, Lenneberg further worked on it and made it popular in 1967. Gomleksiz (2001)[5] summarized Lenneberg's research on CPH that he believes that language learning is an innate process, there are certain biological factors that limit the critical period for acquiring a language to two years of age to puberty. He strongly believes that after lateralization (the process of the development of specialized functions of the two sides of the brain) the brain losses its plasticity and like many functions, lateralization of the brain also gets completed by puberty, this is why language acquisition gets difficult after puberty.

The idea of CPH made it important to investigate whether second language learning capacity declines over a period, this is one of the pivotal point in the CPH debate. Since then a lot of research was conducted in favor and even against it. Ervin-Tripp and Susan (1974)[6] conducted a research to check the validity CPH, on 31 English speaking children, who were exposed to French for nine months. Results showed that older students outperformed the younger students. Similarly, Hakuta, Bialystok and Wiley (2003)[7] tested the CPH on the data from the 1990 US Census using self-assessments on three different variables: age on arrival, length of exposure, and language development from 2.3 million immigrants with Chinese and Spanish first language. Instead of finding a markedly different line regressing on either side of the CP, their results showed large linear effects for level of education and for age on arrival.

On the other hand, Johnson and Newport (1989)[8] worked in favor of CPH, they conducted a research on 46 Korean or Chinese migrants in United States, who lived there between 3 to 26 years. The results were based on a grammaticality judgment task, which proved that the idea of critical period is not only limited to a first language but it extends to a second language as well as the age effect was seen in all the rules tested. But according to Tukodome (2010)[9] decline in language proficiency cannot be justified by factor of age or due to neurological reasons only as stated by Lenneberg, other factors can also contribute to it such as motivation or language input, as they are equally important for achieving high L2 proficiency. Similar to this, the factor of 'Motivation' is one of the important aspects of Second Language learning. It can be called the desire to learn a new language. If students do not have such desire to learn a second language, then it would get difficult to teach them. Therefore, it is important to kindle that desire in the students. Due to this aspect, Gardner is the pioneer in this field who worked on the role of 'Motivation' in the Second Language Learning. Initially, Gardner working with his research supervisor, Lambert and presented their idea of motivation in their research paper 'Motivational Variable in Second Language Acquisition' in 1959, stating that the factor of motivation is equally important for the learners of second language as it is for a child who is learning his/her first language. They further elaborated the idea that Second Language Learners adopt characteristics of the cultural group whose language they are acquiring. The learner's attitude towards that group defines their success in learning that language to some extent. This attitude is considered as the motivational force, which encourages the learners to learn the language.

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[5] Gomleksiz, Mehmet Nuri. "The Effects of Age and Motivation Factors on Second Language Acquisition." *Firat University Journal of Social Sciences* 11, no. 2 (2001): 217-224.

[6] Ervin-Tripp, Susan M. "Is Second Language Learning like the First." *TESOL Quarterly* 8, No. 2 (1974): 111-127.

[7] Hakuta, Kenji, Ellen Bialystok, and Edward Wiley. "Critical Evidence: A test for the Critical Period Hypothesis for Second Language Acquisition." *American Psychological Society*, (2003): 31-38.

[8] Johnson, J.S, and E.L. Newport. "Critical Period Effects in Second Language Learning: The Effects of the Maturational State on the Acquisition of English as a Second Language." *Cognitive Psychology* 21 (1989): 60-99.

[9] Tukodume, Makoto. "Unlikely Bedfellows: The Critical Period Hypothesis and its effects on Second Language Acquisition." *Texas Papers in Foreign Language Education* 14, No.1 (2010): 18-27.

Gardner (2001)[10] believes that learning a new language is different from learning any other subject at school as learning any other language means making something foreign a part of one's self. In the light of this idea, Zareian and Jodaei(2015)[11] highlighted that learning a second language influences learner's behavior and thought, when learners are learning a second language they in way try to integrate the speech sounds, grammatical structure, behavioral patterns, and cultural specification of the target language in their life. Moreover, while addressing university students in Spain in 2006 Gardner[12] claimed that it is quite difficult to describe the term motivation, instead he gave certain characteristics of motivated individuals stating, He believes that motivated individuals set a goal, they make efforts, are determined, attentive, have 'wants', positive attitude, are self-confident and have set motives. On the other hand, Dornyei (1998)[13] argues on the exact definition of 'motivation', commenting that even though many researchers have worked on this term 'motivation' but none of them have given a clear definition of this concept. Furthermore, Ryan and Deci (2000)[14] explained that motivation is equivalent to doing something. A person who does not have any desire or urge to do something is called unmotivated whereas a person who is energized and is activated till the end is called a motivated person.

A lot of models and theories on the idea of motivation are given by many researchers (Gardner and Lambert 1959[15]; Dornyei and Otto 1998[16]; Noels, Pelletier, Clement and Vallerand, 2000[17]; Dornyei and Schmidt, 2001[18]). Two of the major theories are discussed in this paper; Gardner and Lambert's (1959) 'Integrative' (Cultural context) and 'Instrumental' (Educational context) orientations towards second language learning, and 'Self-Determination Theory' by Deci and Ryan (1985)[19].

Liuolienė and Metiūnienė(2006)[20] highlighted that Gardner and Lambert proposed two distinct orientations for learning a language in their book 'Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning' (1972); integrative and instrumental. According to Gardner and Lambert, integrative motivation is a learner's desire to learn and be a part of the cultural community of the target language. While instrumental motivation is the desire to learn a language in order to accomplish a set goal such as passing an exam. Keeping the above theory in mind by Gardner and Lambert, Liuoliene and Metiuniene(2006) concluded that motivation is the driving force for learning a language, be it instrumental or integrative. Similar theory was applied by Engin (2009)[21], the aim of his study was to understand the importance of motivation for the students in a second language learning classroom. A questionnaire and an achievement test were prepared and administered to a group of 44 students. Engin (2009) believes that the motivation level of the learners define their urge and eagerness to learn a second language. He concluded that integrative and instrumental motivations are an important part of the learning process of a second language.

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[10]Gardner, R.C. *Integrative Motivation: Past, Present and Future.*(University of Western Ontario, 2001)
[11]Zareian, Gholamreza, and Hojat Jodaei. "Motivation In Second Language Acquisition: A State of the Art Article." *International Journal Social Sciences and Education* 5, No.2 (2015): 295-308.
[12]Gardner, R.C. "Motivation and Second Language Acquisition." *Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Canada.* Spain, (2006). 1-20.
[13]Dornyei, Zoltan. "Motivation in Second and Foreign Language Learning." *Language Teaching, 31(03)*, (1998): 117-135.
[14]Ryan, Richard M, and Edward L. Deci. "Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: Classic Definitions and New Directions." *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, (2000): 54-67.
[15]Gardner, R.C, and W.C. Lambert. "Motivational Variable in Second Language Acquisition." *Canadian Journal of Psychology*, (1959): 266-272
[16]Dornyei, Z, and Istvan Otto. "Motivation In Action:: A Process Model of L2 Motivation." *Working Papers In Applied Linguistics* 4 (1998): 43-69.
[17]Noels, K.A, and et al. "Why Are You Learning a Second Language? Motivational Orientation and Self-Determination Theory." *Language Learning* 50, No. 1 (2000): 57-85.
[18]Dornyei, Zoltan, and Richard Schmidt. "Motivation and Second Language Acquisition." *TESOL Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (2001): 620-641.
[19]Deci, E.L, and R.M Ryan. *Intrinsic Motivation and Self- Motivation in Human Behaviour.* New York: Plenum, 1985.
[20]Liuolienė, Alvyda, and Regina Metiūnienė. "Second Language Learning Motivation." *Edukologija*, (2006): 93-98.
[21]Engin, Ali Osman. "Second Language Learning Success and Motivation." *Social Behaviour and Personality* 37, No. 8 (2009): 1035-1042.

Second most important theory on motivation is the 'Self Determination Theory' by Deci and Ryan presented in 1985. SDT includes intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Deci and Ryan believe (2000) that intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is 'interesting' and 'enjoyable' whereas extrinsic motivation refers to doing something it takes you to different distinguishable outcomes.

Moreover, Dornyei (2001)[22] is of the view that the variety of intrinsic and extrinsic forms of motivation encourages learners to learn a language depending on how they internalize these forms of motivation. Following this idea, a research was conducted by Niemiec and Ryan[23], 'Applying Self-Determination Theory to Educational Practices' (2009). It concluded that SDT has strong implications on both classroom practice and educational reform policies. They play an important role in positive academic outcomes and classroom practices that encourage students to perform well.

In the above mentioned research two important variables of Second Language Acquisition; 'Age' and 'Motivation' have been discussed separately by the researchers. However, I have integrated these two factors in my research and applied on a single individual to find answer to my research questions.

Methodology

I have chosen Qualitative Paradigm for my research to extract thick description of data from my participant as it would not have been possible through Quantitative research paradigm. My research incorporates three designs, 'Narrative Inquiry', 'Case Study' and 'Retrospective Longitudinal Study'. These three approaches were taken primarily because my sample size was limited to one individual. I was working on a deviant case (Hakuta 1976[24]; Roldan -Martinez and Malave 2004[25]) to challenge the existing theories of second language learning and to explore my participant's language learning process.

Narrative Inquiry is emic in nature, it helped me gain insight into my participant's mind, as her story facilitated me in understanding her approach towards second language learning by helping me explore the insider's perspective. Narrative Inquiry helped elicit narrative account of my participant as it assisted me 'experience' her experiences. According to Connelly and Clendenin[26] (1990):

> The main claim for the use of narrative in educational research is that humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives. The study of narrative, therefore, is the study of the ways humans experience the world… Thus, we say that people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience (Connelly and Clendenin 1990, 1)

Similarly, Case Study design too is emic in nature, it helped me explore my participant's uniqueness in detail, as this design gave me enough space to work on a single individual's behavior and experience in a language learning class and even outside it. According to Yin[27] (2003)

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[22]Dornyei, Zoltan. "New Themes and Approaches in Second Language Motivation Research." *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, (2001): 43-61.
[23]Niemiec, Christopher P, and Richard M. Ryan. "Applying self-determination theory to Educational Practices." *Theory and Research In Education* 7, no. 2 (2009): 133-144.
[24]Hakuta, Kenji. "A Case Study of a Japanese Child Learning English as a Second Language." *Language Learning* 26 (1976): 321-351.
[25]Roldan-Martinez, Carmen, and Guillermo Malave. "Language Ideologies Mediating Literacy and Identity in Bilingual Contexts." *Sage* 4, no. 2 (2004): 155-180.
[26]Connelly, F.M, and Clandinin D.J. "Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry." *American Educational Research Association* 19, no. 5 (1990): 1.
[27]Yin, Robert. *Case Study Research. Design and Method.* 3rd . (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2003).

> A case study design should be considered when: (a) the focus of the study is to
> answer "how" and "why" questions; (b) you cannot manipulate the behavior of
> those involved in the study; (c) you want to cover contextual conditions because
> you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the
> boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context. (Yin 2003, 5)

Moreover, Retrospective Longitudinal study allowed me to bring in my participant's
progress in the English language proficiency course which I taught her last year
(2014).Her test score and final examination result eased my task of evaluating and
analyzing her performance. . My participant's age (67 years) made her a deviant case,
she often outperformed her younger classmates in many language learning activities
being engaged in. Her enthusiasm for learning new things singled her out which led me
choose her as my research participant. My participant did not want me to reveal her
identify in this paper therefore, instead of using her real name pseudonym is being used
here.

I met my research participant six times in total. In a period of one month I met her once
and at times twice a week to extract data from her answers. Our meetings were
scheduled according to her convenience. I met her in different settings, from my
workplace to her house, from a public coffee shop to a roadside restaurant. Different
settings helped me understand her in various frames of mind and every time we changed
the place of our interview she emerged as a different person but with the same approach
towards life in general.

For this particular research I had employed two different tools of data collection;
interview and observation. Based on her narrative, I planned my interview accordingly
with a proper beginning, middle and end. I started my interview with a very general
question gradually moving towards my focus of the study. In the beginning I prompted
her a bit, then gradually she gave in everything. I allowed her to narrate the story of her
experience before, during and after learning a language, in her own style, instead of
acting like a teacher during these interviews I made her comfortable, built rapport with
her with. I shook hands with her, hugged and paid for lunch/tea. Offered to drop and
pick her, to and from her house. These little acts helped me gain her trust, and was ready
to discuss her personal life with me. Due to this close bond between us, she shared her
pictures, videos, personal diary with me. This helped me generate quality data on her
performance and level of motivation.

I took field notes during these interview sessions as my participant was not comfortable
with the recording techniques instead, I maintained a research diary for my field notes. I
also observed my participant while interviewing her in different settings, particularly
focusing on the language in which she interacted with me and the people around us.

I observed my research participant without actively participating in the activities she
was involved, therefore I was a non-participant observer. She interacted with me in
proper English, which showed that she has gained considerable command over this
language. Once she even interacted with her family members in English on Skype who
live abroad. She gave me an opportunity to triangulate and validate my data by allowing
me to put certain questions to her family members regarding her English language
proficiency and her motivation to learn more. Their answers made certain things clear in
my mind, which proved that whatever my participant shared with me was based on facts
and her narrative was not constructed to deceive me. All the above mentioned ethical
considerations were adhered to throughout my data collection process.

Data Analysis

This part of my paper deals with the analysis of the data collected through various interview sessions and observation. I would give the analysis of the findings of all the research questions side by side. First and the foremost variable based on which I started my research was my participant, Nadia's age which has made her a deviant case, and had encouraged me to look into this case in detail. According to her Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) she is 67 years old, born on 2nd of July 1948. When she came for the admission of the English Proficiency course last year she was 66 (2014).

In our orientation class of the English Language proficiency course which I taught last year, I asked Nadia to introduce herself, she shyly told the class that she is 50 plus but did not reveal her exact age, she further added she is taking this course to speak fluent English. This year when I started with my research I asked her about her exact age and inquired why she was reluctant to reveal her real age last year? She replied that she had this feeling that people would laugh at her if she will tell them that she is 66, they would say how can an old lady study with us and I (as a teacher) would get intimidated by her age, according to her this might have demotivated her as well. This shows that age and motivation are interconnected in a way. She was not confident about her age and was afraid that people might discourage her yet she was there because she came with a purpose to learn English and to avoid any such demotivation she hid her age.

As the course progressed so did Nadia. Initially, she used to speak in fragments with a shaky voice (due to the age factor and lack of confidence), gradually she picked up with the pace of the class and became one of the most confident and active students. She used to try and participate in all the activities. At the beginning of the course, she would come after class and ask questions which she could not ask during her class. Later, she started asking questions during our class timings quite confidently. By the time the three month course ended, she came up as the brightest student of the class, outperforming rest of the students especially in her verbal skills. This clearly shows that 'Critical Period Hypothesis' did not work here: she progressed well, scored much better marks than the rest of the students, as her scored fell in the average performance of the class.

As course instructor. I observed that every time I encouraged Nadia to do something, she performed much better in those tasks. Many a times, her performance was outstanding at the tasks that she felt highly motivated at. For instance, we had a format of having a debate/discussion on any given topic in the last part of the class. She would present strong arguments on various topics quite confidently.

Moreover, at times she used to remind herself and the entire class that they are there to learn English. While interviewing her, I asked her why she used to make such comments in the class. She replied that there were days when she felt a bit low because of her age and her motivation level had gone down. There was no one to motivate her at home, not even her husband. Therefore, she felt the need to remind herself loudly that she has to accomplish her goal and learn to speak English fluently. She further added:

> This simple statement freshens up my mind, and then there were you standing in front of us as a teacher who never forgets to encourage her students. We all got positive vibes from you. It was not just me who got these vibes, every student felt the same. You motivated us for learning new things, not just inside the class but also outside it that is why we stayed with you till the end of the course. You have even encouraged me to give IELTS.

I asked her, if she really thinks that a teacher can have such an impact on the students. She said "yes, I strongly believe in that", she supported her answer with an example stating:

> This year when I came back for the English Proficiency course I got a different teacher with a completely different approach towards this course and his students. He failed to kindle the fire within us for learning this language. He neither was creative nor did he encourage us through his actions or his words. That is why many students dropped out in the middle of the course. We started with 20 students and by the end of the course we were only left with 8 students.

The above comment made me realize that teachers play an important role in the lives of their students. A teacher needs to be enthusiastic and encouraging towards his/her students in order to facilitate their learning. A language teacher has to motivate his/her students (Chateau and Zumbihl 2011[28]; Xu 2012[29]; Kaboody 2013[30]; Briggs 2014[31]).

Moreover, I asked Nadia about various problems she faced in learning English. She shared that her falling health is one of the major problems that slows down her learning ability: "this does not mean that I cannot learn a language, I can. Although it gets difficult with the passage of time, yet one can keep on learning if motivated and given enough chances" she further stated that she had fallen sick before coming for this course, but the advertisement encouraged her and moved her from her bed to the classroom. This idea clearly defied Critical Period Hypothesis that learning cannot take place after puberty. She proved it that a language can be acquired even after the age of 60.

In Nadia's narrative there was one more thing that was striking for me apart from her age and her level of enthusiasm for this course and that was her enthusiasm to study this course every time it was offered. She amazed me with her reply, stating that she does not want to sit idle. She wants to stay in touch with this language, and wants to avail herself all the opportunities that come her way to improve her language skills, so that she does not forget the things that she has learnt so far: "I want to stay in practice, so that I don't slide down to the basic level that would disappoint and demotivate me"

This prompted me to ask Nadia about her inspiration and motivation. I inquired about her reasons for learning this language. She gave me a number of reasons for it. I have classified all her reasons in the tables below, all her educational and cultural reasons are classified in table1according to Gardner and Lambert's approach towards motivation in two different categories: instrumental and integrative motivation.

Table 1: Summarizes Nadia's instrumental and integrative reasons for learning English language.

INSTRUMENTAL MOTIVATION (Educational Context)	INTEGRATIVE MOTIVATION (Cultural Context)
I want to speak English fluently like you so that I can teach it.	I want to integrate with the people of this language and understand their culture
I need this skill to impart whatever I am studying or whatever I already know.	I want to learn more languages, because I have travelled a lot around the world, I have met different people and I want to be like them. I want to learn their traditions, their culture through their language.
I want to give IELTS and TOEFL.	

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[28]Chateau, Anne, and H. Zumbihl. "Towards New Roles of Learners and Teachers in a Language Learning System?" *Euro Call. The Call Triangle: Student, Teacher and Institution*, (2011): 29-34.
[29]Xu, Li. "The Role of Teacher's Beliefs in the Language Teaching-Learning Process." *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 2, no. 7 (2012): 1397-1402.
[30]Kaboody, Mastoor Al. "Second Language Motivation: The Role of Teachers in Learner's Motivation." *Journal of Academic and Applied Studies* 3, no. 4 (2013): 45-54.
[31]Briggs, Martin. "Second Language Teaching and Learning: the Roles of teachers, Students, and the Classroom Environment." *All Graduate Plan B and other Reports*, (2014): 1-143.

The above table shows that Nadia is not only motivated to learn English language but also to learn different cultures.

Remaining reasons given by Nadia for learning this language are classified in Table 2, according to the model of Motivation by Deci and Ryan "Self Determination Theory" (1985). It includes two broad categories, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Table 2: Summarizes Nadia's intrinsic and extrinsic reasons for learning English language.

Intrinsic Motivation	Extrinsic Motivation
I love learning this language.	I want to learn this language because I want my husband to praise me for my language skills
I want to learn this language because I want to study more.	People give respect to English speaking people. I want everyone to respect me because of this language. (Prestige)
I want to study English to stay independent.	
I am a writer, love writing, I want to write in English.	
I want to read Aristotle, Plato, Socrates and others in English. (I have already read them in Urdu)	
I want to be an inspiration for others	
I want to learn this language for my grandson, so that we can communicate in English.	
I want to learn this language for my personal growth, for my personal achievements	
I am very social I want to learn this language for socialization.	
I want to acquire this language because I want to live with my son in Australia.	

The above table proves that Nadia has motivated herself immensely to learn English language. She is basically working hard not to impress others but for personal satisfaction. Apart from this, she is motivated to learn this language to impress her husband with her exceptional language skills, as according to her he is uncooperative and thinks that she cannot achieve anything in her life. She wants to prove him wrong by acquiring this language.

In my final meeting with my participant I got a chance to speak to her son over the internet (Skype) who lives in Australia. He told me that his mother is quite motivated. She wants to learn new things every day, but for English she has some kind of craze for this language. She was quite confident that one day his mother will become a fluent speaker of this language just because she wants to achieve that as she is so motivated. He further stated that his father never encouraged his mother (Nadia) but she never let him overpower her or to control her.

The conversation that Nadia had with her son and her daughter-in-law was mostly in English. She inquired about their life and daily routine in Australia. But while having a conversation with her grandson, she spoke fluently in English. She sang few poems with him, and even tried copying his Australian accent.

Further in my interview sessions with Nadia, while discussing her result of the proficiency course (Appendix) I asked Nadia how come she performed so well in the Listening, Reading and Speaking sections of the course while she scored average marks in the Writing section. She said:

> I came for this course because I wanted to polish my speaking skills and speaking is linked to listening and reading both. I am still highly motivated to improve these skills, while I can deal with the writing part later, once I have gained oral proficiency in this language.

This part of her conversation shows that her hard work and motivation helped her achieve this goal irrespective of all the difficulties that she faced back at home even ignoring her age factor, because she really wanted to achieve it saying:

> Women have to motivate themselves to learn different things forgetting how old or young they are. They still can pursue their dreams and achieve them. They have to encourage themselves just to avoid problems during their menopause when they feel they are losing control over themselves, their body might be getting old but they have to keep their minds fresh. The moment you stop using your brain, it stops working. To avoid such decay on one's brain. One has to motivate herself.

Conclusion

The above discussion of my analysis proves that if one is intrinsically motivated to achieve something then age does not play an important role. Therefore, Critical Period Hypothesis is challenged in this paper as the entire discussion is based on a deviant case; Nadia and her high motivation level helped her acquire high proficiency in English language at the age of 66. If the learner is motivated by her/his family or from within then acquiring a language becomes easy. It is also observed through this research that the role of the teacher is equally important in a language class, as he/she has to encourage his/her students for their better learning outcome. In short, age does not play a significant role in language learning, only if the person is motivated enough to achieve something. For instance, a young learner will never be able to acquire a second language if he/she is not motivated, and an adult can easily learn it because he/she is highly motivated. Moreover, this paper has discussed a deviant case, further research can be conducted on a number of participants to defy Critical Period Hypothesis and to favor Gardner and Lambert's (1959) 'Instrumental' and 'Integrative' motivation and Deci and Ryan's (1985) motivation model of 'Self Determination Theory'.

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APPENDIX

University of Karachi

English Language Proficiency Course (Pre-Intermediate)

	Name	Speaking (Max. marks 25)	Listening (Max. marks 25)	Reading (Max. marks 25)	Writing (Max. marks 25)	Total (Max. marks 100)
1.	A*****	20	22	18	21	81
2.	A*****	19	19	18	17	73
3.	A*****	15	18	21	16	70
4.	A*****	17	17	15	16	65
5.	A*****	17	14	15	18	64
6.	A*****	19	15	20	17	71
7.	**Nadia***	**22**	**22**	**20**	**18**	**82**
8.	F*****	19	19	15	17	70
9.	H*****	19	21	20	16	76
10.	H*****	22	18	18	22	80
11.	K*****	21	23	19	20	83
12.	M*****	18	18	18	18	72
13.	M*****	19	20	22	19	80
14.	R*****	18	19	14	16	67
15.	R*****	18	19	20	17	74
16.	R*****	19	16	18	18	71
17.	S*****	17	19	18	16	70
18.	T*****	18	21	15	17	71

*pseudonym