

Telugu-Speaking Adolescents' Acquisition of English as Second Language: An Experimental Study from South India

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Abstract- Any study on English as a second language acquisition needs to be viewed in the context of various difficulties faced by its learners. The problems of teaching and learning English have continued to pose further challenges across the World. It is more so in the case of India and elsewhere, where English is learned as a second language/foreign language. This is more evident from this case study of Telugu-speaking adults of Andhra Pradesh from South India. This paper aims at how second language acquisition takes place in Telugu-speaking adults especially those who transferred from regional medium to English medium in the mid of their school education. In fact, many studies have extensively been done in child language acquisition and adult language learning for many years. But this significant area, in the field of second language acquisition, has been neglected and less explored. This paper exclusively tries to investigate such gap and explores the issues related to phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic developments in the process of second language acquisition.

Key words - Second Language, English, Acquisition, Telugu, Adolescents, Syntax, Morphology.

I. INTRODUCTION

English, as a second language, is always a controversial issue in many communities and countries for implementing it in school education at right time. In fact, the age of the learners decide whether language learning is easy or complex. It has been noticed that many stakeholders have different opinions towards the implementation of English language at school level in several countries. Hence, there is always a contradiction among teachers, educators, political leaders and so on. Many of the linguists state that second language should be taught at the beginning of primary education, so that innate capacity of children facilitates language acquisition and also helps in being exposed to second language in a right time. It has been widely accepted that language learning will be easier to children when compared to adults. However, our informants' age is quite interesting to examine their English language skills. Our study investigates the problems of three informants who transferred from regional medium school (English as a subject) to English medium school (English as medium of instruction).

The informants were brought up speaking Telugu from childhood and used to respond in the same language in schools as well. The names of the informants were Santhosh, Naresh and Rajesh respectively. These three informants were near about thirteen years old when they moved from one medium to another medium. They haven't had any previous exposure to English as an instructional language but they studied as a subject in the school for some years. It was sure that they didn't know the basics of English language for communication. Our observation started after three months of their shifting from Telugu medium to English medium. Subjects were totally immersed in English for communication in teaching and learning. For the first three months, we did only observational study of their behavior towards the English language. They were forced to use only English in the premises of newly joined school. Obviously, parents and relatives at home speak Telugu language and not English. However, parents force informants to speak English as they think English language is very necessary not only for getting jobs but also for other purposes. This study showed how they became familiar to English in their conversations step by step. During the first three months of the observation, the subjects hesitated to use English as they came from regional medium. It was also identified that the subjects were able to comprehend English as an instructional pedagogy with some difficulty. Subsequently, after three months, they started using English utterances in conversations which were memorized.

There is a common assumption about language learning in adults. Adults have more difficulties in learning a second language than children. We all know that several attempts have been made to discover how age matters in language learning. A very common theory is that of biological development. This theory which was first suggested by Penfield Roberts (as cited in Shapira, 1978) maintains that the reason behind adults having difficulty in learning a second language is because of the process of cortical lateralization in which language functions localize in the left cerebral cortex. This development reaches completion at puberty, which was, therefore, considered the critical age.

However, the evidence for a biologically based critical age for language learning was found faulty by Krashen (1973), but the validity of this theory is still very much an open question. An alternative theory was suggested; in which researchers (Rosansky 1975; Hale & Buder, 1970) suggest that a critical period based on cognitive development accounts for the difficulty adults have in learning a second language. Many effective factors are involved in the process of second language learning. One of the most intriguing issues in the study of language acquisition has to do with the possibility that normal linguistic development is possible only if children are exposed to language during a particular time frame or critical period. Evidence for the existence of such a period comes from the study of individuals who do not experience language during the early part of their lives (O'Grady, Dobrovolsky, & Katamba, 1997).

Our informants were not exposed to second language during a particular time frame. Consequently, they faced many difficulties in the process of second language acquisition. "Automatic acquisition from mere exposure to a given language seems to disappear [after puberty], and foreign languages have to be taught and learned through a conscious and labored effort. Foreign accents cannot be overcome easily after puberty. However, a person can learn to communicate at the age of forty. This does not trouble our basic hypothesis on age limitation because we may assume that the cerebral organization for language learning as such has taken place during childhood, and since natural languages tend to resemble one another in many fundamental aspects, the matrix for language skills is present" (Lenneberg, 1967). As stated by Long (1990) and Birdsong (1999), the research questions in the study of SLA were primarily classified into three issues which are given below:

- (i) If language-learners who are young are "better" in learning a second language or not;
- (ii) If native-like L2 proficiency can be achieved by late learners or not;
- (iii) If or not the turning-point age is puberty.

Our study also focuses on these three aspects and examines how our informants acquired English language in certain period of time. Many researchers have been trying to find out the right age to acquire second language. We all know that researchers have continually failed to decide particular time (age of onset of acquisition, or AOA)¹ for second language acquisition. AOA refers to a certain point of time where an individual moves from one place of language domain to another. This may happen in the home country or out of the country. The same case is with our informants also. They were sent to other school where English is taught as a medium of instruction. At home, they speak first language most of the time. Acquiring second language is not that much of easy task but our informants were somehow better in getting second language over a period of time.² The capacities of Language learning appear to lessen slowly over a significant time period, bringing out the question if or not the cognitive aging is straight away related to life-long gradual processes of decay resulting in a stable, dull, but strong decrease in the capacities of language learning (Hakuta, Bialystok & Wiley, 2003). Schepens, van der Slik, & Van Hout (2016) found age bound effects in adult language learners. However, we explain language development of our informants who acquire or learn English as second language at various phases. The results of first II phases investigated showed how they used first and second languages in various domains.

II. PROCEDURE

I collected data from our informants by following various methods and procedures. An observational study has been done to see the informants' exposure to English language. The data was recorded through smart phone and it was analyzed. Our collection of data started after three months and ended in sixth month. I scheduled three times per month to observe and collect data from the subjects. An experimental study was started from fourth month onwards to conduct various tests in different levels like phonological, morphological, syntactical and semantics respectively. This procedure went on until six months. Certainly, two tasks were totally focused to test their comprehensive and productive abilities. This study was conducted in South India especially in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The age of the informants was in between 13 to 15 years old. These informants were in school where English was the instructional medium and had not been exposed to English for more than three months. Undoubtedly, these three informants faced innumerable difficulties to understand the syllabus and curriculum which were heavier in comparison to earlier one. The complexity, in English medium, increased in terms of communication and pedagogy. Because of this, most of the tests were initially conducted based on the comprehension rather than production. Performance inhibition or other factors may be the hurdle to participate in conversations. So, we encouraged them to face the comprehension tests in the process of data collection initially. In the next phases, various comprehension and productive tests were conducted to check their competence and performance levels in various situations.

III. DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Phonological Development

People easily trace out our social identity when we speak some words. Innumerable linguistic clues provide a great deal of geographical, physical and psychological identity. According to David Crystal (2007), children learn a lot regarding the sounds used by adults to show the variation in the message conveyed by the time they turn one year old. In spite of it, their own capabilities in generating these sounds fall back. As a second language learner there is a need to produce and perceive some new sounds which are not available in first language. Accent is one such significant feature of adult second language speech and it is found on the basis of phonological as well as phonetic transfer from the native language. Our informants were also influenced with their native language flavor in pronouncing sounds and words in their speeches. This is the main reason why our informants' speeches distinguish from Indian-accented English. It is well-known that sound systems can decide whether the language acquisition is easy or not in most of the cases. Since our informants' native language has most of the sounds, they didn't feel English sound system as complex. Markedness can decide whether a language is easy or complex to the speakers.³

Our Telugu speakers who are learning English as a second language transferred some sounds and structures from L1 into L2.⁴ This is the case in most of the second and foreign language learners especially in the process of language learning or acquisition. Our informants' speeches were good examples for such issues. Now, we look at some collected samples by our informants randomly.

Table -1

| S. No | Word | Standard phonemic transcription | Phonemic transcription of collected data |
|-------|-------|---------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Rough | /rʌf/ | raff |
| 2 | Joke | /dʒəʊk/ | /ʒə:k/ |
| 3 | Board | /bɔ:d/ | /bɔurd/ or /bɔurddu/ |

In fact, people sometimes consider that the above examples given in table 1 can trace out the inability of the learners in pronouncing certain sounds. But, the fact is that we don't have only English around the world but Englishes. At this point, we can say that it would be one of the English varieties. Though our informants, over a period of time, got better command over the speech sounds, their accent was based on their native language for a long period of time. If we extensively examine phonological development of our informants, there are innumerable issues to be addressed and discussed. Many suprasegmental features like stress, tone, accent, pitch, intonation, etc. have to be explained from our informants' speeches. However, some of the features which were presented by our informants can be interpreted and considered as Indian English variety.

3.2. Morphological development

Morphological development is the most crucial point in the acquisition of language especially at adult age. It is shown that how language learning happens in relation to cognitive aging especially in the domain of morphology (see Birdsong and Flege, 2001). In our classical experiment, we showed some pictures to elicit their ability in using affixes to form internal structures of the words. In initial stages, our subjects failed to produce right morphological structures. In some instances, we clearly found that the affixes of their native language were identified in their usage of English words. Due to lack of awareness about the internal morphological structure in English language, affixes were initially absent in our informants' language and native affixes were replaced in those places. Gradually, these errors disappeared as adult came to realize the correct internal morphological structure systematically. Anyway, they used, right affixes in their production tests at final stage.

Some situations were given to our informants to use compound words in their own spontaneous speech and some compounds found in their speech have not followed the usual pattern of English compounds. It is noticed that children exhibit these types of compounds more and sometimes they create innovative forms of compounds too. Our three informants, occasionally, wrongly formed and misused in spontaneous speech.

Table -2

| S. No | Informants' words | Intended meaning |
|-------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Flight driver | Pilot |
| 2 | Plant cutter | Gardener |
| 3 | Flight Guest | Air hostess/Flight attendant |

These were some of the innovative compounds created by our informants in English speaking. They used inappropriate compounds though English already has words with the intended meaning. The severity of inappropriate compound was less in overall. It is well-known that an inflection suffix such as the plural cannot occur inside compounds. But, in our observational study, we found some compounds where the plural inflections occurred inside the compounds. According to O'Grady et al (1997), inflectional suffix like the plural may not appear inside compounds (compare *dogs catcher with dog catcher). In one of the studies, compounds that obeyed this constraint were produced by children of three years old. So, if a question like 'What do you call someone who eats cookies?' was asked, the answer given by them was cookie eater instead of *cookies eater. Such instances were found in our informants.

3.3. Syntactic Development

It is also observed that the emergence of syntactic structures take place in a systematic manner like other developments. We briefly explain some of the milestones in this syntactic developmental process. This section reveals much about the nature of the language acquisition process. In child's language acquisition, we usually find the order of syntactic developments in an orderly manner and how they apply syntactic categories to the elements. Some errors are usually identified especially in early stages of child. Initially, syntactic categories might be misclassified, misused and ill-formed in the process of language acquisition. As our informants, from Telugu medium background, learnt language through grammar, they have sound knowledge about syntactic categories. However, sometimes, performance failure is, found in forming sentences. Some adjectives were used as verbs and they applied tense inflections to the adjectives. When they were given written tasks in relation to syntactic categories they identified well. This showed that the knowledge was there at competence level but they failed sometimes at performance level due to various reasons.

3.3.1. Pro-drop parameter

Universal grammar includes principles and parameters. Principles are considered as universal principles which are common to all languages. Parameters vary from language to language and these are like linguistic switches. Depending on the nature of the language such parameters are set up by the speakers. Pro-drop parameter is one of the well-known and well-studied parameters in contemporary linguistics and it is made to describe the differences among languages like French and English that need open grammatical subjects (*she met him*/**met him*), languages like Telugu and Spanish which allow subjects to be dropped (*ataduvastuna:qu/vastuna:qu*). In this way, world languages have been universally classified into two types. They are namely pro-drop and non-pro drop languages. Probably, the languages which permit null subjects prioritize different grammatical characteristics related to them. As an example; they prioritize declarative sentences with the word order (verb + subject as well as subject + verb). Similarly, Telugu Permits free word-order in the sentences. So, the word order possibilities would be in Telugu SVO, VSO, OVS, etc. Even it allows omitting not only pronouns but also some other elements at discourse level.

1. a. ne:vu atani daqara nunfi a: pustakamu tisukunava:?
 you-NOM he-ACC near from the book take-PST-PNG-Q
 Did you take the book from him?

b. tisukuna:nu.
 take-PST-PNG
 (I) took (it).

When compared to French Speakers, learners of English depict that Telugu speakers most possibly consider subject less English sentences to be grammatical. There is a belief in literature that in the initial phase itself, L1 parameter settings are moved to interlanguage grammar. Learners, as part of second language acquisition, should reset parameters that have different values in the L1 and L2. Our informants, in most of the cases, omitted pronouns in day to day conversations. Since English was learnt as a second language by our informants, the possibility of omitting pronouns would be more and more especially in spoken. But, to some extent, they were better in written. However, the severity of dropping pronouns would be much lesser over a period of time. As we emphasized on this parameter they started implementing in their conversations. We all know that as part of the language acquisition, in the initial phases, pronoun dropping rate was more in the usage of English language and in the latter phases it was well-learnt and implemented in written and spoken forms as well. Consider their responses below.

2. Speaker A: Are you coming to college?
 Speaker B: Coming.
 Speaker A: Have you borrowed the book from library?
 Speaker B: I borrowed.

Our informants were such students who didn't expose to English language in critical period. Because of that, they were facing a lot of struggle in the process of English language learning. It has been examined that the language development of our informants is in all phases.

One more interesting aspect of syntax is making interrogatives in English language. The development of interrogatives by our informants showed how transformations happened in making interrogative sentences. Interrogatives can be generally classified into two types. Those are *wh*-questions and *yes or no* type questions respectively. In interrogatives, inversion is always obligatory and when it comes to *wh*-question, *wh*-word should be moved to the front of string. Similarly, auxiliary should be moved to in front of the subjects. During the period of IInd phase, our three informants produced a number of *wh*-patterns which are as following:

3. a. Where are you stay?
 b. Where you do go?
 c. What this is Ramu?
 d. You going where?

The given *wh*-patterns were chosen randomly from our informants in various contexts. If we linguistically observe these phrases or sentences, they differ from correct *wh*-patterns. Initially, in I and II phases, it is found that our informants were not able to form right *wh*-patterns to pose questions. Even the position of be form is not fixed or predictable. Sometimes, auxiliary was preceded and sometimes it was followed by the subjects. In fact, listeners were not confused since they knew how to interpret such sentences in various situations. Semantic interpretation of these phrases always depends on context rather than word order. It is because of their less awareness in making question forms in English. However, over a period of time, Santhosh and Rajesh got command on making right question forms. Naresh took more time to form questions in English.

Now, let us examine *yes/no* type questions. Our informants, in most of the cases, used declarative sentence structures to form *yes/no* type questions initially. The below examples were randomly chosen from their speeches.

4. a. You are goingu?
 b. Are you coming toschoolu?
 c. You come by Monday?
 d. Where you going?
 e. You will come next month?
 f. Did you saw me?
 g. Are you cominga:?

The examples (4. a & b), the final words '*goingu*', '*schoolu*' changed within a word boundary. The process of intra-word switching was found in our informants' sentences initially. Some occasional examples of various patterns were found in their speeches. The structure of *yes/no* type questions is fixed in English language. However, the domination of the native patterns of language took an important role in their utterances especially in first two phases. Since Telugu is their native as well as null subject language, it allows dropping various elements at discourse level. The examples represented in their speech reflect the influence of mother tongue on L2.⁵Most of the elements were dropped in English utterances because of the influence of L1 features. These features are commonly found with many Telugu speakers who try to learn second or foreign language. This is a common phenomenon and over certain period of time, they came to know how to form *yes/no* type questions in a better way. Eventually, learners understood the systems which were not matched with English grammar. Marilyn Adams (1974) offers three main strategies in the development of *yes/no* rules. Declarative word order is applied in the first one and the sole signal for the question is the rising intonation. This strategy was evidence in the utterances of our informants. Whereas, rising intonation was quite the most general way to signal *yes/no* questions in the second stage when no optional auxiliary element exist. In the third stage, *be* inversion stabilized for all spontaneous speech. Our informants learned after some weeks *do*-inversion before *did* and *does*. They used to be confused with the variations of *do* forms and

they mixed *did* and past form of verb as shown in (4. f) in initial stages. In the final phase, those issues were cleared and our informants were able to identify the variations between two languages in making question forms. Sometimes repetition of various elements was found within sentences. Certain examples were witness to explain how our informants formed such ungrammatical and confused structures to pose questions or make statements. Upon examining the nature of their speech, it is indicated that most of the semantic interpretation would be based on their tone and discourse. It seems difficult to comprehend the meaning of other sentences if we look at grammar point of view.

5. a. I don't know where is he.
- b. I know what do you mean.
- c. Let me know who is he.

These above examples show how the interference of direct question making was involved in making such structures. This led to making errors in relative clauses especially in case of word order. These types of errors were found extensively in their speeches at initial stage. Our informants realized the correct forms of such structures especially Santhosh and Rajesh from final phase. Naresh was not that much of good in making such relative clauses. He was a slow learner. However, our informants became better in forming such sentences in their speeches. Turning our attention towards semantic development of our informants, we now discuss second language acquisition and its issues.

3.4. Semantic Development

Semantic feature is one of the most crucial topics in second language acquisition. Many dairy studies presented how semantic development happens or impedes in the process of child and adult language acquisition. Scholars provided some hypotheses about semantic system especially early acquisition of the meaning of object names. The well-known semantic hypotheses are, in literature, contrastive hypothesis (Barrett, 1978), semantic feature hypothesis⁶ (Eve Clark, 1973, 1975), the prototype hypothesis (Bowerman, 1978), and the functional core hypothesis (Nelson, 1974, 1977). Clark (as cited in Midori Yoshida, 1978) divides the overextensions into several categories: related to movement (Pavlovitch: *dzin, dzin*, used for a moving train, then a train itself, and finally for a journey by train), related to shape (Imedaze: *buti*, used for ball, and then extended to toy, radish, stone sphere at a park entrance; Leopold: *tick-tock*, used for a watch, then generalized to clocks, all clocks and watches, gas meters, a fire hose wound on a spool, a bath scale with round dial), related to size (Kenyeres: *baba*, for baby, then for adults in pictures), related to sound (Leopold: *sch*, noise of a train, to music, noise of any movement, wheels, balls), related to taste (Leopold: *candy* to cherries to anything sweet), related to texture (Leopold: *wau-wau*, for dog to toy dog, to soft slippers, and to a picture of an old man dressed in furs). It is well-known that perceptual properties are the only significant characteristic in the primary hypotheses of children regarding word meanings. Hence, children normally overextend a word to incorporate perceptually related objects which they knew to have various functions. Adults may not have exactly such errors but we found that these three informants used some vocabulary in such a manner. Overextensions were identified in their comprehension tests. Of course, they haven't used exactly how children generalize the overextension words.

6. a. I saw a flight. (chopper, aircraft, airplane, jet)
- b. The cool drink would be tasty. (cool drinks, cock tail, mock tail)
- c. I like the green leaves. (all leaves)
- d. I saw a good girl. (nice, beautiful, clever, helpful)
- e. My brother has computer. (instead of laptop)

If a child says *horse* meant animal, it sometimes refers to *donkey* and *camel*. The fact suggests that the child never thought *horse* means *animal* and s/he just borrows it until the right word comes along. Not surprisingly enough, our informants used overextensions in their conversations. This might be due to lack of vocabulary. Once they learnt right words, over extension has been limited in their usage. It shows that our informants overextended some words deliberately and these attempts vividly explain how informants compensate for vocabulary limitations. Subsequently, informants controlled in using over extensions especially when they were aware of certain words.

The collected data indicated that these adults also used overextending words in the same way how children use them. This experimental and observational study reflects the process of overextensions would be same in child and adult language acquisition and the difference is found at level of vocabulary usage. Children are able to acquire, in

most of the cases, right words through imitations whereas adults learn through contextual clues over a period of time. The outcome was not so captivating, showing that overextensions in comprehension were very less common when compared to productive tests. It was observed, in the final phase of tests, that once informants became familiar to right words, they stopped using overextending words. Similarly, it would be the same in child language acquisition as well. However, when our informants got the right words, they showed a lot of curiosity to use them in right contexts. The most important of another type of word meaning error in language acquisition involves under extensions and it would initially be identified much clearer in child's language acquisition. Of course, our informants haven't used such underextending words. Nelson reported that children who had very high comprehension scores also had high active vocabulary scores. This notion doesn't seem true in these cases. Santhosh showed high comprehension but his production is not up to the mark. After six months of exposure to English, we tested them and there was a slight difference in both the tests.

IV. ANALYSIS

Initially, informants, as part of the phase 1 test, were given 20 sentences to change voice from active to passive. During the first three months, they concentrated on second language grammar. So, they were more or less able to reproduce those sentences in the right forms. This test was taken place in the fourth month of their shift to English medium. Both Santhosh and Rajesh scored 80 % in transforming the sentences from active to passive and the reason may be they are learning English as a second language. It is observed that most of the adults, especially regional language background learners, try to learn a second language through grammar. Eventually, once confidence is built, they improve speaking skills in natural settings. Naresh was not up to the mark and he scored only 45%. The main reason might be, he was a slow learner or more comfortable in Telugu medium rather than English. Of course, three informants haven't mastered in this test and practice was more required for upcoming tests. Three schedules were strategically planned and conducted in natural settings in the fourth month. The improvement was observed in every test in their comprehension test. However, the sentences were changed in every test.

The second test was storytelling to test their comprehensive skills. At this stage, teacher was asked to explain or narrate a story to the informants. After this, students were asked to write it up on the paper. When we examined the scripts, interestingly enough, some uncommon errors were, found in their write up. It was quite interesting that untold words were used to explain the story in written form by the informants. As these types of tests were conducted three times per month, the familiarity with the teacher and texts associated with the informants, developed to show their betterment in fifth and sixth months. Santhosh and Rajesh coped up with the new educational environment without much struggle. Performance of Naresh was not improved like Santhosh and Rajesh. He was not able to overcome from his shyness and fear of speaking English. So, he failed to communicate with the fellow mates freely. In this way, Naresh was struck by new educational settings. However, omission of constituents was found in all informants' speeches. It was observed that comprehension of three informants was far superior to their production in many tests. Our empirical data vividly explained throughout all the tests that comprehensive tests were, to the informants, easier than the productive tests.

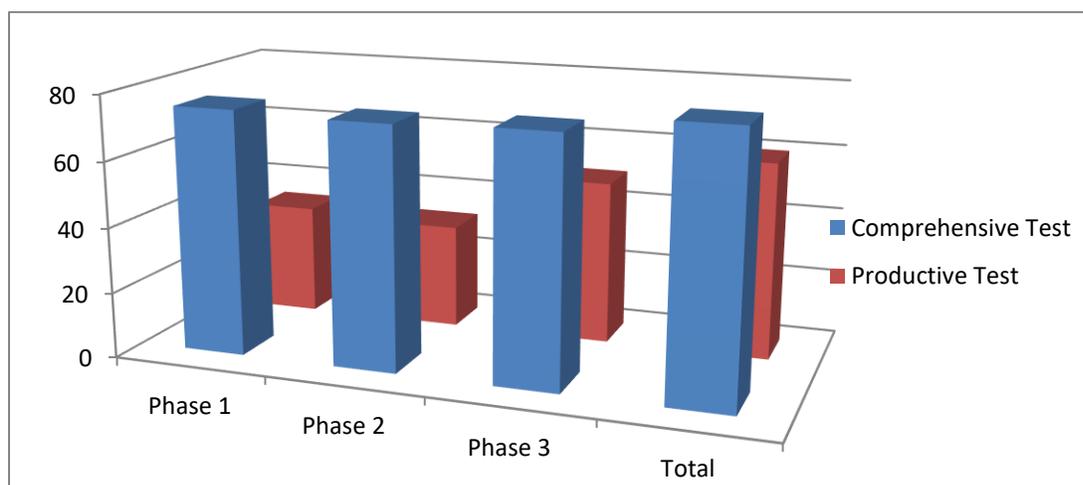


Figure 1. Phase wise and overall progress in mastery of English language by our informants

In first phase, the correct responses in comprehension were 75%, whereas the correct responses in production attained only 34%. In second phase, the former was 74 % whereas the latter was 32%. In the final phase, the former was 75% whereas the latter was 50%. In comparing phase I, II and III, no difference in comprehension was found, but in production, the result of Phase II slightly declined and third phase was also not up to the mark. This was due to the fact that their wrong answers in various levels of tests are because of questions that are increased in terms of numbers and level of difficulty. We classified all the tests month wise into three phases. Every month, three tests were conducted and these three tests were combined to form a phase. Similarly, remaining tests were also combined to form other two phases. The notable change was found in every phase especially in comprehension tests. Overall percentage of all comprehension tests was 80% and production tests overall percentage was 60%.

The difficulties of adult informants, in this study, represent some specific observations which were faced by many students who shift mediums in the mid of their school education. It has been proved in many studies that children learn their first language so readily. There is, in literature, an assumption that children born in to a given speech is already programmed with knowledge of the language of speech community. Language has been presumably inherited from their parents. This study provides supportive evidence in favor of early second language learning. Since our informants were introduced English at the last minute of their mid school lives, they faced a lot of difficulties to learn English as a second language. It is noticed that language can come to the child in almost the same way as the ability to walk. Therefore, it is better to introduce any new language as early as possible.

V. CONCLUSION

To conclude, a case study of the English language acquisition, by three informants who shifted from regional medium to English medium, was conducted over a six months period. In the process of second language acquisition, they faced numerous difficulties in every phase at phonological, morphological, syntactical and semantic development. So, it is pointed out that certain time was preferred to acquire language especially before puberty age. Otherwise, language learning in adults specifically who shifted from one medium to other medium, face some difficulty in acquiring or learning a language as shown in this study. We designed certain tests to investigate their competence and performance levels in various situations. There is a necessity to consider and acknowledge certain hypotheses, which are helpful to develop language acquisition faster in the critical period and in making educational policy by the government. Most of the empirical studies have been conducted to test various hypotheses which suggest betterment in acquiring language in a right age. All our analysis was established on the basis of empirical observation rather than speculation. However, language acquisition becomes easy if learners are exposed in a right time. In fact, some difficulties faced by our informants suggest focusing on certain issues to facilitate the learners in the process of language learning at different levels. Contemporary researchers should focus on these issues to understand how language acquisition or learning takes place in the brain especially age wise.

Notes

¹ A learner's AOA plays a major role in L2 learning according to many researchers (Abrahamsson, 2012; Abrahamsson & Hyltenstam, 2009; Bialystok & Hakuta, 1999; Chiswick & Miller, 2008; DeKeyser, 2000, 2013; Flege, Yeni-Komshian, & Liu, 1999; Stevens, 1999).

² Even though many of the researches implies that "earlier is better" which means that younger L2 learners are better at learning language when compared to older learners, the reason of this specific phenomenon remain to be controversial (DeKeyser, 2013).

³ According to O'Grady, Dobrovolsky, & Katamba, (1997) unmarked structures are those that are simple and/or particularly normal in human language, whereas marked structures are those that are complex or less common.

⁴ Second language acquisition is investigated through comparing relative markedness of structures in both L1 and L2 according to Markedness Differential Hypothesis (O'Grady et al, 1997).

⁵ Butter worth (1972) says about his adolescent Spanish-speaking informant, Ricardo, that 'if he can be said to use any regular strategies at all, it is that he transferred syntax from Spanish and simplified all kinds of other forms. This left him with 'telegraphic' English speech in Spanish syntax.

⁶ Semantic Feature Hypothesis postulates that the primary representation of a word is seen as unfinished, as it includes only a subset of the semantic components which are connected with the same word in adult usage. As the first definition of a new word is incomplete, the child makes many referential errors while using it. The number of criterial features in the child's definition of a word increases, until its meaning is complete, or, in other words, conventional. The extensions of words to novel objects are, in Clark's opinion are based mainly on perceptual similarity. This means objects that are referred to by the same word are perceptually same in some way, especially in relation to shape, size, movement or sound.

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