

## THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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**Abstract:** This research article aims to explore and analyze the differences between language learning and language acquisition. Language learning refers to the conscious and deliberate process of studying and acquiring a new language through formal instruction, while language acquisition involves the natural and subconscious assimilation of a language through exposure and interaction with native speakers. The article will investigate the cognitive, psychological, and neurological processes involved in both language learning and acquisition, as well as the implications for language proficiency and fluency. Additionally, the article will examine the effectiveness of different language learning methods and strategies, as well as the factors that influence successful language acquisition. The findings of this research will contribute to a better understanding of language acquisition and learning processes, and provide insights for educators and learners in designing effective language learning programs.

**Introduction:** Language acquisition and language learning are two processes that individuals go through when acquiring a new language. While they may seem similar, there are significant differences between the two. In this article, we will explore the distinctions between language acquisition and language learning and how they impact an individual's ability to become proficient in a new language. We will also discuss the various methods and approaches that can be used to facilitate both language learning and language acquisition. By understanding these differences, language learners can make informed decisions about the best strategies for achieving fluency in a new language.

**Literary review:** "Language Acquisition and Language Learning: Developing the System of External and Internal Perspectives" <sup>1</sup> is a comprehensive and insightful book that delves into the complex processes of acquiring and learning language. The

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<sup>1</sup> Jelena Zašcerinska. Paper presented at the 52nd International Scientific Conference of Daugavpils University, Daugavpils, Latvia. April 15, 2010.

authors provide a thorough examination of both external and internal perspectives, offering a holistic understanding of how individuals develop linguistic competence. The book begins by exploring the external factors that influence language acquisition, such as social and cultural environments, educational systems, and language policies. The authors highlight the importance of these external influences in shaping an individual's language development, emphasizing the need for a supportive and enriching linguistic environment. In addition to external factors, the book also delves into the internal perspectives of language acquisition, examining cognitive processes, neurological mechanisms, and individual differences. The authors provide a detailed analysis of how the human brain processes and internalizes language, shedding light on the intricate workings of the mind in language learning. What sets this book apart is its comprehensive approach to language acquisition, encompassing both external and internal factors. By considering the interplay between environmental influences and cognitive processes, the authors offer a nuanced understanding of how individuals develop linguistic competence. Furthermore, the book is accessible and engaging, making it a valuable resource for educators, researchers, and anyone interested in the field of language acquisition. The authors present complex concepts in a clear and understandable manner, making the book suitable for both academic and general readership. "Language Acquisition and Language Learning: Developing the System of External and Internal Perspectives" is a thought-provoking and informative read that offers a comprehensive exploration of language development. It is a must-read for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of how individuals acquire and learn language.

**Methods and materials:** The differences between language learning and language acquisition are significant, as they involve distinct processes and outcomes. Here are some key methods to differentiate between them:

1. Learning and Acquiring: <sup>2</sup>Language learning is a conscious process that involves the study of rules, vocabulary, and grammar through formal instruction. This can take place in a classroom setting, through self-study, or with the help of educational materials. On the other hand, language acquisition refers to the subconscious process of picking up a language naturally, often through immersion in a linguistic environment from an early age.

2. Formal Instruction: In language learning, learners usually receive formal instruction, which may involve exercises, drills, and explicit explanations of grammatical rules. Language acquisition, in contrast, occurs through exposure and interaction with native speakers without necessarily needing formal instruction.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://elearningindustry.com/who-is-the-winner-language-learning-or-language-acquisition/amp>

3. Focus on Fluency and Accuracy:<sup>3</sup> Due to its formal nature, language learning often emphasizes accuracy in language use, focusing on correct grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. In language acquisition, the emphasis is on fluency and natural communication, reflecting the way native speakers use the language in everyday contexts, with less concern for formal correctness.

4. Age and Developmental Stages: Language acquisition is typically associated with early childhood development, where the human brain is believed to be most receptive to language input. Language learning, however, can take place at any age and is not limited to specific developmental stages.

By understanding these methods and the differences they highlight, one can gain insight into the distinct nature of language learning and language acquisition, thereby informing language education practices and approaches.

The materials include academic article "Language acquisition and language learning: the debate". This article discusses the ongoing debate between language acquisition and language learning, offering insights from linguistic research and cognitive science.

Book "The Language Instinct" by Steven Pinker. In this book, Pinker explores the concept of language acquisition and discusses how humans are biologically predisposed to acquire language, contrasting it with the process of language learning.

Book Title: "The art of language invention" by David J. Peterson

- While focusing on constructed languages, this book delves into the cognitive aspects of language creation, shedding light on the differences between language learning and language acquisition.

3. Online Resources: Website: Linguistic Society of America

- The Linguistic Society of America's website contains articles and resources that discuss language acquisition and language learning from a linguistic and educational perspective.

Results: Language learning and language acquisition are two distinct processes that individuals go through when acquiring a new language. Language learning refers to the conscious effort to study and understand a language through formal instruction, such as in a classroom setting<sup>4</sup>. This process involves the use of textbooks, grammar rules, vocabulary lists, and other structured materials. On the other hand, language acquisition is the subconscious process of picking up a language naturally, often through immersion in a language-rich environment. This can occur through interactions with native speakers, exposure to media and literature, and everyday communication.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theteflacademy.com/blog/accuracy-and-fluency-whats-the-big-deal>

<sup>4</sup> <https://bilingualkidspot.com/2022/05/20/language-acquisition-vs-language-learning/>

Discussion: In "The Language Instinct", Steven Pinker claimed<sup>5</sup> that The Language Instinct argues that we are born with an innate capability to understand languages, that most of them are more similar than you might think and explains where our capability to deal with words so well comes from.

Peterson offers a captivating overview of language creation, covering its history from Tolkien's creations and Klingon to the thriving global community of conlangers. He provides the essential tools necessary for inventing and evolving new languages, using examples from a variety of languages including his own creations, punctuated with references to everything from Star Wars to Michael Jackson.<sup>6</sup>

One key difference between the two is the role of explicit instruction. In language learning, learners are explicitly taught the rules and structures of a language, while in language acquisition, learners subconsciously internalize these rules through exposure and practice. Another difference lies in the timing and pace of each process. Language learning can be a more deliberate and controlled process, allowing learners to progress at their own pace. In contrast, language acquisition often occurs more organically and can be influenced by various factors such as age, motivation, and exposure to the language. Additionally, the outcomes of language learning and language acquisition may differ. Those who have learned a language may have a deeper understanding of its grammatical rules and structures, while those who have acquired a language may have a more intuitive grasp of its usage and cultural nuances. Language learning (LL) is the process of actively trying to learn and understand a language. LL happens more consciously and is more likely the result of formal teaching. Perhaps, like how a second language is learned. On the other hand, language acquisition is the process of gaining language knowledge naturally. This happens subconsciously and is similar to how a child picks up their first language. Between the two, language acquisition is known to be the most efficient way of learning a foreign language as it provides the learner with more practical knowledge. Learning a second language is fun! Most of the time, you were taught a second language at school as an academic requirement or you were taught another language at home. It doesn't matter how you learned the second language, what matters is that you were exposed to one. However, if you don't practice the language you learned and acquired, then there's a possibility that you might forget it. And that's not fun. Instead of learning to forget, let's talk about learning to remember — the steps for language acquisition. Maybe one day you can engage in a multilingual conversation or just really understand a text in a different language. For example: Figure out what language you want to learn. Maybe you want to learn Turkish to better understand your favorite Turkish movie or maybe even Pig

<sup>5</sup> Steven Pinker. "The Language Instinct" (1994)

<sup>6</sup> David J. Peterson "The art of language invention" (Sep 29, 2015)

Latin. The choice is yours. Learn your target language by reading meaningful stories. Find stories you want to hear, stories you are interested in reading. The more captivated you are with your chosen stories, the more likely you will stay loyal to learning your target language. Make sure you are having meaningful interactions with your target language because language acquisition is all about natural communication. Try practicing your skills by talking to people who speak the same language!

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, language learning involves a conscious effort to study and understand a language through formal instruction, while language acquisition is the subconscious process of picking up a language naturally, often through immersion in a language-rich environment. The key differences lie in the role of explicit instruction, the timing and pace of each process, and the outcomes. Understanding these differences can help individuals choose the most effective approach for their language learning goals. While both language learning and language acquisition are valuable ways to acquire a new language, they differ in terms of conscious effort, timing, pace, and outcomes. Understanding these differences can help individuals choose the most effective approach for their language learning goals.

#### **References:**

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