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The Importance of Implementing the English Language at Algerian Primary Schools.

A Case Study of Private Primary School at Lina Kharoubi, First Year Middle School Students at Fodhil Babaali and EFL teachers at Almaahed Private School.

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for Master's Degree in Applied Linguistics

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List of Abbreviation:

(L1): First language

(L2): second language

(L3): Third language

(SLA): Second Language Acquisition

(TLA): Third Language Acquisition

(FLA): Foreign Language Acquisition

(CP): Critical Period

(CPH): the Critical Period Hypothesis

(UA): Ultimate Attainment

(AO): Age of Onset

(ESL) : English as a second Language

(EFL) : English as a Foreign Language

(FFL) : French as a Foreign Language

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By Anfel Sid, Meriem Laidi and Khalida Babaali

Abstract

This paper aims at exploring the influence of age on the ability to learn English language among Algerian primary pupils. To answer the research questions we compared two age groups: pupils who started learning English in the first year of middle school and pupils who started learning English in primary school. A test was designed to compare the achievement of the two groups in vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing. Further questionnaires were administered to teachers who were asked to answer 12 questions. Responses were analyzed using quantitative methods. Test results showed that early starters (primary school pupils) perform better than late starters (middle school pupils).

Moreover, the results of teachers' questionnaires were in accordance with the pupils' test, indicating that primary pupils perform better than middle school pupils. The results show that learning English from an early age is a major factor in improving learners' English learning ability.

Keywords:

EFL: English as foreign language, early starters, late starters, Age, Algerian primary pupils.

General Introduction

Introduction

Algeria is considered a multilingual country, Algeria's official language is Arabic, therefore pupils start learning Academic Arabic as part of the syllabus with French as a second language at primary school, and the English language is included in the curriculum as a foreign language (EFL) starting from middle school. Yoko Iwai (2011) defines EFL (English as a foreign language) as those who study English in non-English speaking countries; which is the case in Algeria since English is not widely used for communication in the country and it is not used as a language of instruction. As Stern (1983) pointed out the differences between "foreign language" and "second language" in "Fundamentals of Language Teaching ". In his view, a foreign language refers to the language used abroad. Learning a foreign language is for travelling, communicating with native speakers, reading foreign magazines, and more. But a second language is a language that plays an equally important role as a native language. English is becoming more and more common in the world; as published in the English Effect report by the British Council, English is now spoken by more than 1.75 billion people around the world, accounting for a quarter of the planet's population (Beare, 2020); as a result, more and more people are spending time learning English as a second language. According to the British Council, there are 750 million speakers of EFL and 375 million students of ESL (English as a second language) around the world. Many countries teach children the language from an early age in the school curriculum. Since English is considered to be the first lingua franca, the researchers in this study aim to bring attention to the importance of inserting the English language into the Algerian syllabus starting from primary school.

Statement of the Problem:

As a multilingual country, Algeria represents a complex linguistic society, but one in which English is not promoted as the key to modernisation by policymakers.
In Algeria, pupils start learning English in middle school at the age of 11 up to 18 in secondary schools. Theoretically, this should enable them to learn the language successfully. However, Algerian students find difficulties learning the English language concerning the four skills (speaking, writing, listening, and reading).

The Research Purpose:

This paper seeks to shed light on the importance of inserting the English language into the primary schools' curriculum in Algeria by researching the difference between early and late EFL starters' performance.

The Research Questions:

1/ Why is it necessary to implement English language syllabus in Algerian primary schools?

2/ Is there a significant difference between Algerian learners who start learning English at the age of 5/6 as compared with those who start at the age of 11/ 12?

3/ To what extent is the achievement of these two groups differ in relation to linguistic properties of English (grammar, writing, vocabulary, and phonetics)?

4/ Are primary school pupils capable of learning two foreign languages at the same time

The Research Hypotheses:

In an attempt to answer the research questions we advance a number of Hypotheses which are as follows:

- The younger the pupil, the better he is at learning EFL.

- Students who learn English before middle school perform better in (grammar, writing, vocabulary, and phonetics) than those who do not.

- Children are capable of learning more than two foreign languages at once (French and English in this case).

Research Structure:

This research is divided into three (3) chapters; one theoretical chapter and two practical chapters.

The first chapter, named Literature Review, contains the definitions of some concepts such as the critical period hypothesis and age of onset, and two main ideas are presented: the critical period hypothesis and age effect on second language acquisition.

The second chapter addresses the research methodology, it presents the research design, population, sampling, and data gathering tools. Besides, it presents the Data analyses.

The third chapter tackles the discussion of the main findings obtained from the questionnaire and the test.

Definitions of Terms:

The Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH): The critical period hypothesis refers to a specific period in human life that enables people to acquire a language more quickly and easily in their natural environment without external intervention and formal guidance (Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams, 1983).

Second Language Acquisition: Second language acquisition or SLA is the process of learning another language in addition to a native language.

Early Starters: learners who start learning EFL at the age of 5/6.

Late Starters: learners who start learning EFL at age of 11/12.

Puberty: the beginning of adolescence, marked by the end of the critical period of learning a language.

Age of Onset: The age of onset is the age at which a person acquires, develops, or first experiences a condition or symptom of a disease or disorder. This is the age at which the critical period begins.

Ultimate Attainment: The ability to attain native-like proficiency in an L2.

Bilingualism: According to Bloomfield (1933: 56) bilingualism is the ability to control two languages like a native.

Literature Review:

Language Acquisition and Age

This section deals with the literature and previous studies in relation to language acquisition and age effects.

Language Acquisition

Language acquisition begins three months before birth and progresses gradually until the child learns his or her native language around puberty (Elman et al. 1996; Karmiloff and Karmiloff-Smith 2001)

Language acquisition can be divided into two categories. First language acquisition is well known as a mother tongue or native language (L1), and second language acquisition.

First Language Acquisition:

First language acquisition is the process of acquiring the mother tongue from birth or even prenatally. Children learn their native language quickly and efficiently, "they intuitively transition from the 'initial state' to the 'final state' (Crain and McKee 94), and "There is a growing agreement that by age 3 children have the phonological, morpho-syntactic and semantic laws of the L1" (Weissenborn and Höhle vii).
However, (Berman 10) claim that while becoming a native speaker of L1 is a quick and efficient process, it takes a long period to become a competent speaker. (Wrobel, 2013. n.d)

Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

Second language acquisition or SLA is the process of learning another language in addition to a native language. It is also the systematic study of how people learn languages other than their mother tongue.

Second language acquisition has influencing factors such as age, which can affect the acquisition process.

Third Language Acquisition (TLA)

Cenoz (2003) states that third language acquisition is the process of learning a non-native language by learners who have previously acquired or are acquiring two other languages (L1 and L2). The acquisition of the first two languages can be simultaneous (as in early bilingualism) or consecutive.

Third Language Acquisition vs. Second Language Acquisition

Most linguists, such as Singh and Carroll, Mitchell and Myles claim that there is no difference between the acquisition of L2 and L3. The 'second' language term in this context can refer to any language (also a third or fourth language) acquired beyond L1.

Different Stages of Child SLA:

The childhood stage is often identified in terms of developmental changes that are said to correspond to qualitatively different ideas (Berk2006).

These stages also follow primarily the division of school education.

- Early childhood (children between the ages of 2 and 7 in preschool and first grade).

- Junior high school students (7-11 years old, elementary and junior high school).
- Early adolescence (12-14 years old, junior high school).
- Subsequent adolescence (15+, high school) (see, eg, Krause et al., 2003; Muñoz 2007).

Depictions of these stages, characteristic of all children, are a logical starting point for examining the differences between young and older L2 learners, in all children, especially in the field of educational psychology. Not supported by working people (e.g. McKay 2006; Muñoz 2007).

Effects of Age on SLA:

Age factors have been the subject of debate in second language acquisition research for decades. Researchers have seen a variety of questions – about how young and old learners differ when it comes to language learning. Which instructions are most beneficial to a particular age group and learners of which age group shows maximum success, and others (Aydin & Özfidan, 2014; Aydin & Koc, 2012; Spinner & Gass, 2019).

What is the best age category to start L2 learning?

As Stern argues (cited in Shakouri and Saligheh, 2012), each age category has its strengths and weaknesses. Shakouri and Saligheh agreed that when one should start learning L2, there is no time to be too late or too early; but their opinion is that it is important to start early. Young learners are more profitable because they learn the language through intuitive skills.

Different approaches to age effects on SLA

1) Maturational approaches

A maturational approach to language acquisition is assumed to be due to biological changes that are consistent with the age effects observed in second language acquisition and therefore affect human language acquisition abilities. Proponents of this view (e.g. Long 1990, 2005; Meisel 2007) have assumed there is a "window of opportunity", during this time frame learners are more likely to succeed in achieving native-like levels of competence in a (second) language, once this window is closed after brain maturation, native-like attainment in language outcomes declines.

2) Usage-based approaches

In contrast to generative perspectives, proponents of language acquisition usage-based theories (such as Tomasello 2003) have found that linguistic rules are a meaningful structure that arises through the use of language, to varying degrees of grammar. It is assumed to be grammaticalized or abstracted. "In contrast to thinking of linguistic rules as an algebraic procedure for combining words and morphemes that do not contribute to meaning in themselves, this approach considers the linguistic structure itself as a meaningful linguistic symbol-they mean. A linguistic symbol is used in communication "(Tomasello 2003: 5). The principles of cross-domain learning, such as associative learning, are sufficient to develop a fine-tuned knowledge system to address the characteristics of L1.

3) Learner's variety approach

Proponents of the learner diversity approach (e.g., the contributions in Perdue 2000; Dimroth & Starren 2003; Hendriks 2005) have found that unsupported adult L2 learners' learning choices' are language and communication specific. Claims to be notified by the principle. This conclusion is based on the knowledge that the learner's language can systematically deviate from the source and target languages. Adult L2 learners without early support have been found to develop so-called basic diversity (Klein & Perdue 1997). It is a learner's language characterised by a lack of functional inflection and word order primarily based on the principles of semantics and information structure.

L2 Vocabulary Acquisition among Children

The age of acquisition of vocabulary items has been extensively studied in the L1 setting. Most studies are conducted by experimental psychologists. Working with vocabulary items can help psychologists study memory, Dementia, the effects of ageing, and the effects of certain brain injuries. One Influential study ranks 30,000 words based on their average age Acquisitions (Kuperman, Stadthagen-Gonzalez, and Brysbaert, 2012). Although the research is interesting, they are only indirectly related to the topic of current research.

Insufficient research in the field of children's second language vocabulary acquisition can be facilitated by applying research methods L1 learns the case of L2. Unfortunately, there is relatively little research aimed at examining vocabulary acquisition in early serial bilingual immigrants children. Currently, available research shows that word frequency is related to working age. However, the order in which the words are written is: The frequency with which words are learned and strengthened

seems to have a greater impact than learner age (Izura & Ellis, 2002; Schwartz & Kazier, 2012). Schooling is also effective, as direct teaching of vocabulary leads to the acquisition of these items. In a second language environment, it tends to be in a relatively stable word introduction order, completely different from the ordinal numbers that appear in the first language and are high frequency words described earlier.

What should be the second language vocabulary? A moving target where native speakers continue to thrive, not the syntax that remains stable once acquired (Cobo-Lewis, Pearson, Eiler, and Dagger, 2002). However, through effective education, second language learners Eventually more or less "catch up" (Goldberg, Paradis & Crago, 2008). Goldberg et al. (2008) found that age of onset affected their research on second language learners from diverse backgrounds. However, her research is taken in an ESL setting where English is part of the everyday environment. Likewise, the Cobo-Lewis study (2002) was conducted in an ESL setting, but The kids speak Spanish in Miami, which is usually the local language. No studies were found to measure the effect of beginning vocabulary acquisition in an English-speaking environment.

Defining Bilingualism

According to Bloomfield (1933: 56) bilingualism is “the ability to control two languages like a native”. For Haugen (1953:6), bilingualism is to produce "complete and meaningful speech (utterances) in other languages '. Weinreich (1953: 1) considers bilingualism as “the practice of alternately using two languages".

Age Effect in bilingual studies

Many families are monolingual but want their children to learn another language. After all, there is substantial evidence that bilingualism benefits cognition (e.g. Bialystok, 2007). One of the questions that are discussed when teaching a foreign language is when is the best time for a child to start learning another language.

Some evidence suggests that students who start late are at a disadvantage. One study found that bilingual adults with a later age of onset (after age 10) had no cognitive improvement demonstrated by early-onset bilinguals (Luk, De Sa, & Bialystok, 2011).

The study also showed that later-onset bilinguals were less proficient in a second language (English). It may not come as a surprise at first glance, but the adults in the study studied English for 10 years. After 10 years of learning English, both groups seem to reach a balance. But this is not true. Some children are exposed to two (or more) languages from birth.

These children are sometimes called “simultaneous bilinguals.” Those who do not learn two languages from birth are generally called “sequential bilinguals.” In sequential bilinguals, those who start earlier (under age 6), are generally found to outperform adults in the long run, provided there is enough exposure (Unsworth et al., 2011).

Studies like this have led to various hypotheses regarding a critical or sensitive period for second language acquisition. This idea was first discussed in the late 1960s (Lenneberg, 1967), and since that time, a debate has raged regarding this critical period hypothesis while the exact natures of these hypotheses are still being debated,

there is general agreement among researchers that certain age effects exist, particularly in the areas of pronunciation and morphosyntax.

Unfortunately, there is relatively little research on sequential bilinguals, also called child second language learners. The bulk of research compares simultaneous bilinguals with monolinguals in an ESL setting. Therefore, it is not clear to what extent the age of early-onset forms the conditions for second language learning to reflect first language learning. In other words, it remains unanswered whether children who are continuously bilingual behave more like first language learners, motivated bilingual learners, or second language learners.

One study found that serial bilingual users have developmental patterns similar to adult second language learners in terms of morphological syntax (Granfeldt, Schlyter, & Kihlstedt, 2007). However, in a code-switching study, successive early-onset bilinguals behave similarly to concurrent bilingual learners rather than late-onset second-language learners (Toribio, 2001).

Pedagogical Programs Supporting the Claim “the Younger the Better"

Foreign language programs are less ambitious but tend to set more complex goals. They intend to introduce L2 to young learners to develop a positive attitude towards language and language learning as well as language purposes and to help them become competent foreign language users as adultsdoing. For example, a recent document on European language policy states that ensuring effective language learning in kindergartens and primary schools is a priority. Such a program is to "form an attitude towards other languages and cultures and lay the foundation for later language learning" (Committee European Community, 2003, p. 7). In addition

to social influence and linguistic interests, a study of early bilingualism (Bialystok, 2001, 2005) found that continuous management of two competing languages was an executive function and a higher level of metalanguage recognition. (Cook, 1992; 1995); Recently, similar results have been seen in bilingual adults (Bialystok, Craik, Klein & Viswanathan, 2004). To set realistic goals for early learners, it is important to consider the level that the learner will reach in bilingual education and the time it will take to acquire native language skills in L2. Studies show that it takes five to seven years to reach grade-level standards for departments taught in English, depending on the educational program (Wong Fillmore, 1998). A recent longitudinal study found that infants became stronger after four years. Enrolled in an English school (Flege, Birdsong, Bialystok, Mack, Sung, and Tsukada, 2005), indicating that native accents are not automatically available. The ratio of curriculum available to L1 and L2 learners is an important factor in comparing SL and FL programs. According to Cummins (n.d.), the results of a 30-year study have focused on three major variations of the French immersion program with early immersion from kindergarten or first grade. Grade 4 or 5 to medium soaking. Slow immersion from grade 7. Everything is characterised by at least 50 percent of French instruction in the early stages. Between grades 5 and 9, the ratio drops to about 40 percent. It is consistently documented that students are fluent in French, literate, and as a result, do not suffer from L1 academic achievement. In 5th grade, there is no difference in English test performance between immersion students and pure English comparison groups. In 6th grade, French is close to native in listening and reading, but oral and written L2 is not very good.

Critical Period Hypothesis

The second section of the theoretical part highlights the theory of the critical period hypothesis CPH and presents the main studies that support this theory.

The Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH):

Research over the years has discussed the link between age and learning languages, music, and exercise. Most researchers agree that children can gain full mastery of all language domains during the critical phase of first language acquisition. The effect of age on second language acquisition is one of the most controversial issues in the field of second language acquisition. Since its further development, it has attracted the attention of language acquisition researchers. The Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) by Eric Lenneberg (Dong & Ren, 2013, Huang 2014).

Two neurobiologists, Penfield & Roberts (1959), pioneered the concept of the critical period hypothesis, which is mainly derived from biology. The critical period hypothesis refers to specific periods in human life that enable people to acquire a language more quickly and easily in their natural environment without external intervention and formal guidance (Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams, 1983).
(Rahman et al, 2017, p.2)

According to Birdsong (1999), "CPH shows limited development. The time period during which you can learn a language at the level of a normal native speaker, either a first or a second language. However, once this time is exceeded, The learning of the framework language is reduced" (p. 1).

In other words, proponents of CPH argue that there is a critical point: a time from early childhood that ends at the beginning of puberty.

According to CPH, those who want to acquire native language skills must learn a language at a critical stage. After this time frame, it is almost impossible for a person to feel like a local (Tokudome, 2010). CPH is considered one of the most important assumptions as it is believed to play a crucial role in the success, effectiveness and completion of language learning.

The Origins of the Critical Period Hypothesis

CPH first appeared in 1959 when Penfield and Roberts wrote a chapter entitled “The Learning of Languages”; they firmly supported the belief that the younger the child, the easier and better his performance would be. This is clearly represented in the following line of reasoning: “Remember that for the purposes of learning languages, the human brain becomes progressively stiff and rigid after the age of nine” (Penfield & Roberts, 1959, as cited in
Nelson, 2012, p. 14). However, it is noted that the biological basis of language has been proposed and linked to the critical age of 1953 It debuted with Penfield and his ideas (Montrul, 2008, p. 10).

Interestingly, in Reneberg's original book (1967) "Biological Basis of Language " (Nelson, 2012, p. 11). He elicited supportive evidence from several sources such as recovery from trauma Aphasia. For example, "Children before puberty have a good chance to recover from aphasia and develop Language normally ... People with destroyed language ability after puberty appear to have diminished resources for reconstruction ”(Hurford, 1991, p.160).

Reneberg (1967) tried to determine the age that which it's too late for individuals to start learning their first language. By doing so he used various types of evidence, including:

- Data from recovered aphasia.
- Language development Mental retardation;
- Sudden deafness at Various ages.

Therefore, according to Lenneberg a structural reconstruction that occurs beyond puberty, all language skills not learned before will remain undeveloped permanently (Schouten, 2009, p.2). In other words, later in the "puberty" era, it will be completely impossible to learn your native language.

Two versions of the CPH

Nevertheless, there are two versions of the hypothesis. "Weak version" claims so : To achieve complete acquisition, language acquisition should begin within the age of onset, and after this levelling, "the potential for language learning is greatly (but not completely) reduced."

On the other hand, the "strong version" shows that there is no continuation after the offset. Language acquisition/learning (singleton, 1989, p. 38). Caused as a result of these two versions.

Researchers suggest different positions when CPH starts and ends / decreases.

THE CPH and Cases of Linguistic Deprivation

One of the most known studies related to CPH and L1 acquisition is the case of “Genie”, Genie grew up in social isolation for several years until her discovery in 1970. Until she was 13 and 9 months Genie had not acquired any language yet. After 7 years of rehabilitation and receiving intensive courses in language, she was capable of relearning her native language, but her syntax and morphology never fully developed (Fromkin, et al., 1974; Curtiss et al., 1975).

A similar case was found in the 1930s in the case of the "Isabel", born to a silent illiterate woman who had been isolated in the attic for years because she was illegal. At the age of 6 and a half, she couldn't make a standard speech. However, after two years of intensive language training by professionals, she spoke the language better than any other child of her age. (Sparknotes, 2011).

These cases prove that the reason Isabelle reacquired the language perfectly is that she was within the critical time limit of language acquisition, a limit which Genie had exceeded.

Another case of linguistic deprivation is that of “the wild child of Aveyron”.The boy was captured in a forest near the village of Saint-Cernin in the Aveyron district of France and appeared to be 12 or 13 years old, but had no oral language. The Wild Boy was given the name Victor by his trainer Ital. The latter attempt to teach Victor to speak is futile, suggesting that the boy is just one of many cases in support of CPH's main claim in FLA (Steinberg, 1993; Montrul, 2008).

Another case study was with a woman named Chelsea who was born a deaf person. Her doctor misdiagnosed her as retarded. She was not exposed to any kind of language, so when she was 31, she was referred to a neurologist and she was

diagnosed as a deaf person. Her hearing worked properly with hearing aids. She was able to acquire a lot of numbers; she generated words and utterances of multiple words, but she could not even generate such sentences as Genie did, despite extensive rehabilitation. For example, Chelsea said, " breakfast eating girl" ; Her form and syntax were inferior to those of Genie (Curtiss, 1988).

What are the implications of these case studies?

Why was Isabelle able to achieve native-like attainment while Genie and Chelsea were not?

Among other factors, the researchers have concluded the main reason Isabel acquired her native language skills was because of her exposure to them before the end of the critical period.

However, despite extensive training and rehabilitation, Genie and Chelsea were unable to develop English syntax not only because they were unable to acquire native language skills, but also because they were exposed to the language after the critical period.

Furthermore, Genie learned to generate simple syntactic structures but Chelsea did not. It shows that the critical period does not vanish by the onset of puberty, but it declines gradually.

The Acquisition of Grammatical Features

There are many supporters of CPH as a reason why second language learners failed to achieve L2 proficiency (Johnson & Newport, 1989; Flege et.al., 2006; Benabdellioua, 2019; Sharabidinovna et.al., 2020.).

Their attitude is directly derived from the results of studies they have conducted on various participants to test their performance in several linguistic aspects, especially in grammar. Of note here is the use of tests to assess grammar, one of the salient features of the studies used to measure native language performance in L2 grammar.

Therefore, Oyama (1978) and Patkowski (1980) examined the level of proficiency in a given set of grammatical structures, among other things, among immigrants arriving in the United States at various ages. Therefore, both researchers have come to the notion that the age of arrival of the subjects is the only determinant of their ultimate English proficiency, and therefore learning SL after completing CP leads to its incomplete acquisition. Sticked (Schouten, 2009p. 3).

Similarly, Johnson and Newport (1989) were 46 native Korean and Chinese speakers who arrived in the United States between the ages of 3 and 39 at the time of the exam and lived in the United States between the ages of 3 and 26.
A grammar evaluation task was used for this purpose.

As a result, researchers concluded that pre-pubertal language proficiency should decline significantly with age, with random fluctuations in later learners' L2 performance. In other words, CP for language acquisition extends its impact to SLA. The results of this study are consistent with those of Oyama (1978) and Patkowski (1980).

In addition, Hyltenstam (1992) conducted a survey of participants who emigrated to Sweden before puberty and lived there for more than five years. The results were compared with the Swedish native speaker control group. The final comparison shows that respondents who came to Sweden after the age of 7 had more grammatical errors than Swedish-speaking participants. Also, students under the age of 6 who came to Sweden made fewer mistakes than the other groups. Hyltenstam (1992) states that age plays an effective role in SLA, and the length of time participants are immersed in the target language is also considered an important factor.

Sharabidinovna et.al (2020) used the ideas and facts provided in previous studies to review the case of two students in a second language acquisition stage in the context of Uzbekistan. Two learners of different ages were selected to conduct the case study.

The first female participant, 12-year-old M, began learning English at age 7 (pre-puberty), and the second male participant, 19-year-old S, began learning English at age 15 (post-puberty). A short interview was conducted to test the subjects' speaking skills and gain a general knowledge of their grammar. During the interview, we checked the students' pronunciation and grammar accuracy. This was combined with a test to evaluate their grammar.

The results showed that the best time to effectively master L2 phonology and grammar was before the adolescent age.

The results of Sharabidinovnaet. al. (2020) and the denominators of Oyama (1978), Patkowski (1980), Johnson and Newport (1989), and Hyltenstam (1992) have

a common denominator. All of these support the idea of "the best time to use the L2 grammar effectively". The acquisition is before puberty. " Sharabidinovna et al. However, he emphasised other factors involved when the SLA came to the fore. They concluded that "miracles can also occur in the field of linguistics, so we must not forget about other factors such as learning style." In addition, Hyltenstam (1992) added another factor: the length of time participants are immersed in the target language.

The Acquisition of Pronunciation

First, in their study, critical evidence: Testing the Critical Period Hypothesis, Hakuta, Bialystok, and Wiley (2003) provided data extraction from this 1990 U.S. Census so that the age at which English is encountered in SL. They clarified how much it affects proficiency.

They used responses from 2.3 million immigrants with a background that speaks Spanish or Chinese. At this point, researchers concluded that age-related decline in second language ability at the time of initial contact was a real function of performance on a large population basis. Therefore, this study supports CPH.

Other studies which provide influential evidence supporting the notion that a CP influences SLA with a specific focus on pronunciation include a study by Flege et.al (2006) who assessed the degree of foreign accent in 62 native Korean speakers learning English as a second language.

All in all, it was found that “native Korean children… were judged to produce English sentences with milder foreign accents than the native Korean adults” (p. 168). That is younger means better. Similarly, Abrahamsson and Hyltenstam (2009)

reported on a large-scale study of Spanish/ Swedish bilinguals (n =195) with different ages of onset of acquisition (<1–47 years).

The researchers conducted telephone interviews with the participants. Importantly, the evaluated audio samples were taken from some of the interviews where participants were asked to speak freely for a minute about the famous Swedish children's writer Astrid Lindgren. Researchers have concluded that the ultimate achievement of SL by native speakers is, in principle, not achieved by adult learners.

In a more recent study, Benabdellioua (2019) tested the effect of age factors on second language pronunciation learning. To achieve this goal, experiments were conducted at the Fly High Private Language School in three groups of learners of different ages (n = 42), based on the critical period hypothesis. The first group consists of eleven (11) year old learners (before puberty), the second group is composed of thirteen (13) year old learners (age of puberty) and the third group includes fifteen (15) year old (after puberty).

The participants were given a pretest to determine their prior level, and then they had six sessions on pronunciation learning before they were given a posttest which provided an overall view of the level of improvement for each group.

The findings of the experiment show that there is a huge gap in terms of improvement from the pretest between the three groups. The researcher concluded that the younger the learners are, the better and the quicker they attain the pronunciation of the target language.

Dollmann, Kogan, and Weißmann (2020) focused on the phonological aspect of language acquisition—the strength of the foreign accent in L2. Using data from a large representative dataset (CILS4EUDE) of young people with a background of

German immigrants, researchers have CP until around the age of 10 and then oral language skills without foreign language accents. It has been shown that it is less likely to learn. In addition, they provided evidence that the language resembles their native language.

"The Younger the Better "

In support of the statement that children are better at learning L2 than adults are. Many studies were conducted to test various language skills. As in Language in India the case of Yamada et al., (1980) who investigated the learning success of a list of 40 mono- and disyllabic English words of 30 Japanese students -7, 9, and 11 years -, and found that "the older the age the lower the score" (p. 245).

Another study is the case of Garcia (1969,) who researched the level of the accent of 71 immigrated Cuban participants, ranging from 7 to 19 years old, living in California for about five years, it was found that the younger the child entering the country, the higher possibility of a native-like accent, whereas the length of stay was not a crucial variable.

Another case study Hyltenstam (1992) conducted on Swedish immigrants before puberty (one case was after) with more than five years of residency (one case was three years). The participants were tested on their skills in grammar and lexis of the Swedish language in speaking and writing the results were compared to a group of Swedish native speakers.

The findings showed that the number of errors in grammar and lexis by participants who arrived in Sweden after the age of seven is more than the number of errors committed by the native group. Moreover, the number of errors by those who arrived in Sweden before age six overlapped with those of the other two groups. This is an indication that age plays an effective role in L2 Learning, and that the length of participants' residence was reported as a significant factor.

Chapter Two:

Methodology and Data Analysis

This chapter deals with the procedures as well as the instruments used to carry out this study, it also describes the target population, the area where the study was conducted, the research design, and statistical methods followed in analysing the study results. The chapter ends with an analysis of the study findings.

Research Methodology:

Leedy and Ormrod (2015) define the research methodology as a general approach the researcher takes in carrying out the research project; to an extent, this approach dictates the tools the researcher selects.

Before the data collection of this research started, official permission to visit the schools selected was obtained from the Directorate of Education of Médéa and the University of Yahia Fares - Médéa.

This research followed a quantitative method design to answer the research questions. Quantitative method design encompasses a range of methods concerned with the systematic investigation of social phenomena, using statistical or numerical data (Watson, 2015). The major advantages of this method lie in its ability to assist the researcher in dealing with the investigation under study with subjectivity. According to (Leedy & Ormrod 2001; Williams, 2011) "Quantitative research involves the collection of data in order to quantify information and perform statistical processing to support or disprove alternative knowledge claims"
Thus the current study uses quantitative models to obtain precise numerical results for participants‘responses and to process the collected data to either support or disapprove the hypotheses above.

Case Study:

This field study took place in Kharoubi Private primary school, Foudhil Babaali Middle school, and Almaahed private school. It was addressed to primary school and first year middle school pupils, in addition to EFL teachers of ALMAAHED and Fodhil Babaali middle school. This research was conducted in the form of a case study and used a quantitative method. Two main instruments were used: The teachers' questionnaire and the pupils' test.

The private primary school consists of sixty pupils divided into three classrooms. We handed our test to thirty pupils from the three classrooms randomly chosen; however, we collected only 25.

The middle school consists of 152 first year pupils divided into five classrooms. We distributed our test to fifty pupils in the three classrooms randomly chosen; however, we collected 43 papers.

In our research, we distributed our questionnaires to 8 EFL teachers of ALmaahed private school, and 3 teachers of Fodhil Babaali middle school.

Data Gathering tool:

The researchers used two instruments in the current study: a Test and a Questionnaire.

Description of the pupils' Test:

In order to find the difference between learning English at an early age and later age, we designed a test that consists of five tasks, the first two tasks aim to

evaluate grammar and writing level, the third task tackles phonetics, the fourth task vocabulary and the last one is a written expression.

Pupils were told to not write their names and that their answers would not affect their marks in English. They were also told that their answers would remain confidential and that no one in school would see or evaluate them, therefore, were urged to exert sincere efforts so we could obtain a true image of their competence in English.

Questionnaire

Kothari (2009) said that a questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms.

Description of the teachers' Questionnaire:

In our research, we handed over 11 questionnaires to the EFL teachers of Almaahed private school and Fodhil Babaali middle school.

The questionnaire contains 12 questions directed to EFL teachers in order to evaluate the age variable in learning EFL.

Teachers were asked about their teaching profile (gender, age, qualification, and years of teaching experience).

The teachers were asked to rate questions from A TO E based on their experience in teaching children and adults.

A: strongly agree B: agree C: not sure D: disagree E: strongly disagree

Question One (1): The performance of pupils who start learning EFL at the age of 11/12 is weak.

This question aims to evaluate the performance of middle school pupils who did not study EFL at a younger age.

Question Two (2): The performance of pupils who begin learning a foreign language at an earlier age (5/6) is better than those who start later (11/ 12).

This question aims to compare between pupils who start learning EFL at an early age and later age.

Question Three (3): Pupils who start learning English at the ages of (11-12) are better at grammatical rules than younger ones (5-6 years).

This question is designed to know whether children are capable of comprehending grammar rules.

Question Four (4): Adult learners are better than younger ones in reading skills.

This question seeks to compare the reading skills of adults and children.

Question Five(5): The younger students are, the better they will learn English.

This question looks for whether children, in general, are better than adults in learning EFL.

Question Six (6): Learners who started learning English at an early age speak English more fluently than those who do not.

This question aims to compare adults' and children's speaking skills.

Question seven (7): Young students are much better than adult ones in acquiring vocabulary.

This question seeks to compare vocabulary acquisition between adults and children.

Questions eight (8) and nine (9):

8 -The suitable age to start learning EFL is the age of 5-6.

9- The best age to start learning EFL is 11-12.

These two questions look for a suitable age for learning EFL.

Questions ten (10), eleven (11) and twelve (12):

It is better for students to start a second foreign language after mastering the first foreign language.

Young students can learn two foreign languages at once (French and English in this case).

Learning EFL affects student performance in French.

These three last questions aim at highlighting any interference between EFL and FFL.

Data Analysis

Research findings:

This section reports the analysis of the data gathered from the participants of the study. Therefore, the authors will present the results obtained from the primary and middle school pupils' test, along with the results obtained from English as foreign language teachers (EFL) teachers' questionnaire. The analysis of the findings will start first with the questionnaire of the teachers followed by the test of the pupils. Hence, each question addressed to the teachers and the pupils will be analysed separately.

Presentation of the results of the teacher's questionnaires (12 questions):

Table 1.1: for the Analysis of Question 1

The performance of pupils who start learning EFL at the age of 11/12 is weak

Question 1	Percentage
strongly agree	0%
agree	0%
not sure	33.33%
disagree	50%
strongly disagree	16.66%

As shown in the table above, the answers of the teachers varied. It appears that half of the teachers' sample disagreed with the claim that students who start learning

English at an early age, perform better than those who do not. However, 33.33 seemed uncertain about their knowledge/ position in relation to this claim. Moreover, only 16.66 of teachers disagreed with this claim. Finally, none of the teachers reported their (strong) agreement with the claim that learning the English language earlier is better.

Table 1.2: for the Analysis of Question 2

The performance of students who begin learning a foreign language at an earlier age (5/6) is better than those who start later (11/ 12).

Question 2	Percentage
strongly agree	66.66%
agree	16.66%
not sure	0%
disagree	16.66%
strongly disagree	0%

The results show that most of the teachers' sample strongly agrees with the claim that pupils who start learning English at an early age (5-6), perform better than those who start later (11_12). However, 16.66% agree. Moreover, only 16.66 of teachers disagreed with this claim. Finally, none of the teachers reported their strong disagreement nor their uncertainty with the claim that learning the English language earlier is better.

Table 1.3: for the Analysis of Question 3

Students who start learning English at the ages of (11-12) are better in grammatical rules than younger ones (5-6 years).

Question 3	Percentage
strongly agree	33.33%
agree	16.66%
not sure	16.66%
disagree	33.33%
strongly disagree	0%

The results demonstrate that the answers of the teachers were varied. It appears that 33.33% of the teachers' sample strongly agree with the claim that Students who start learning English at the ages of (11-12) are better at grammatical rules than younger ones (5-6 years), However, 16.66% agree,16.66 % seem uncertain about their position in relation to this claim. Moreover, 33.33% of teachers disagreed with this claim. Finally, none of the teachers reported their strong disagreement with the claim that the old learners are better at grammatical rules.

Table 1.4: for the Analysis of Question 4

Adult learners are better than younger ones in reading and skills

Question 4	Percentage
strongly agree	16,66%
agree	33.33%
not sure	16,66%
disagree	16.66%
strongly disagree	16.66%

The statistics indicate that 16.66% of the teachers' sample strongly agrees with the claim that adult learners are better than younger ones in reading skills.

Moreover, the highest percentage 33, 33% agree, and 16.66 % seem uncertain about their position in relation to this claim. However, 16.66% of teachers disagree with this claim. Finally, 16.66% of the teachers reported their strong disagreement with the claim that the old learners are better at reading skills.

Table 1.5: for the Analysis of Question 5

The younger learners are, the better they will learn English.

Question 5	Percentage
strongly agree	0%
agree	50%
not sure	16,66%
disagree	16.66%
strongly disagree	16.66%

The outcomes show that none of the teachers strongly disagree with the claim that the younger students are, the better they will learn English. Furthermore, half of the teachers' sample agrees. However, 16, 66 % seemed uncertain about their knowledge in relation to this claim. Moreover, only 16.66% of teachers disagreed with this claim. Finally, 16.66% of the teachers strongly disagree.

Table 1.6: for the Analysis of Question 6

Learners who started learning English at an early age speak English more fluently than those who do not.

Question 6	Percentage
strongly agree	50%
agree	33.33 %
not sure	16.66%
disagree	0%
strongly disagree	0%

The figure shows that half of the teachers strongly agree with the claim that Learners who started learning English at an early age speak English more fluently than those who do not. Furthermore, 33.33% of the teachers' sample agrees. However, 16, 66 % seem not sure. Finally, the teachers neither disagree nor strongly disagree with this claim.

Table 1.7: for the Analysis of Question 7

Young learners are much better than the adult ones in acquiring vocabulary.

Question 7	Percentage
strongly agree	33.33%
agree	16.66%
not sure	33.33%
disagree	16.66%
strongly disagree	0%

The table illustrates that 33.33% of the teachers strongly agree and 16.66% agree that Young students are much better than the adult ones in acquiring vocabulary, 33.33% are not sure and 16.66% disagree. Finally, none of the teachers strongly disagree with this claim.

Table 1.8: for the Analysis of Question 8

The suitable age to start learning EFL is the age of 5-6

Question 8	Percentage
strongly agree	33.33%
agree	33.33%
not sure	16.66%
disagree	16.66%
strongly disagree	0%

The obtained results show that the majority of the teachers 33.33% strongly agree, and 33.33% agree with the claim that the suitable age to start learning EFL is the age of 5-6. However, 16.66% are not sure, and 16.66% disagree. Finally, none of the teachers strongly disagree with this claim.

Table 1.9: for the Analysis of Question 9

The best age to start learning EFL is 11-12.

Question 9	Percentage
strongly agree	0%
agree	16.66%
not sure	16.66%
disagree	33.33%
strongly disagree	33.33.%

The statistics show that none of the teachers strongly agree with the claim that the best age to start learning EFL is 11-12, 16.66% agree. However, 16.66% seemed uncertain about their position in relation to this claim. Moreover, 33.33% of teachers disagreed. Finally,33.33% of the teachers reported their strong disagreement.

Table 1.10: for the Analysis of Question 10

It is better for students to start a second foreign language after mastering the first foreign language

Question 10	Percentage
strongly agree	0%
agree	16.66%
not sure	16.66%
disagree	33.33%
strongly disagree	33.33%

The table detects that The majority disagree 33.33% strongly disagree,33.33% disagree that It is better for students to start a second foreign language after mastering the first foreign language, and 16.66% seem uncertain. However, 16.66% of the teachers agree and none of them strongly agree.

Table 1.11: for the Analysis of Question 11

Young students can learn two foreign languages at once(French and English in this case)

Question 11	Percentage
strongly agree	50%
agree	16.66%
not sure	16.66%
disagree	16..66%
strongly disagree	0%

The table results indicate that half of the teachers' sample strongly agrees that young students can learn two foreign languages at once (French and English in this case). Moreover, 16.66% agree. However, 16.66% are unsure about their knowledge of this claim and 16.66% disagree. Finally, none of the teachers strongly disagree.

Table 1.12: For the Analysis of Question 12

Learning EFL affects student performance in French.

Question 12	Percentage
strongly agree	16.66%
agree	33.33%
not sure	16.66%
disagree	33.33%
strongly disagree	0%

As shown in statistics half of the teachers' sample 16.66% strongly agree, and 33.33% agree supporting the statement that Learning EFL affects student performance in French. However, 16.66% seemed uncertain about their knowledge in relation to this claim. Moreover, 33.33% of teachers disagreed with this claim. Finally, none of the teachers reported their strong disagreement.

Presentation of the pupils' test results:

Presentation of the results of the private primary school:

This table shows the percentage of the pupils' marks on the test.

Observation	Percentage
Acceptable (from 10 to 13/20)	22.72%
Good (from 14 to 16.5/20)	36.36%
Excellent (from 17 to 20/20)	40.90%

Table2.1

The majority of pupils' scored excellent marks on the test (from 17 to 20), The rest performance was between good and acceptable.

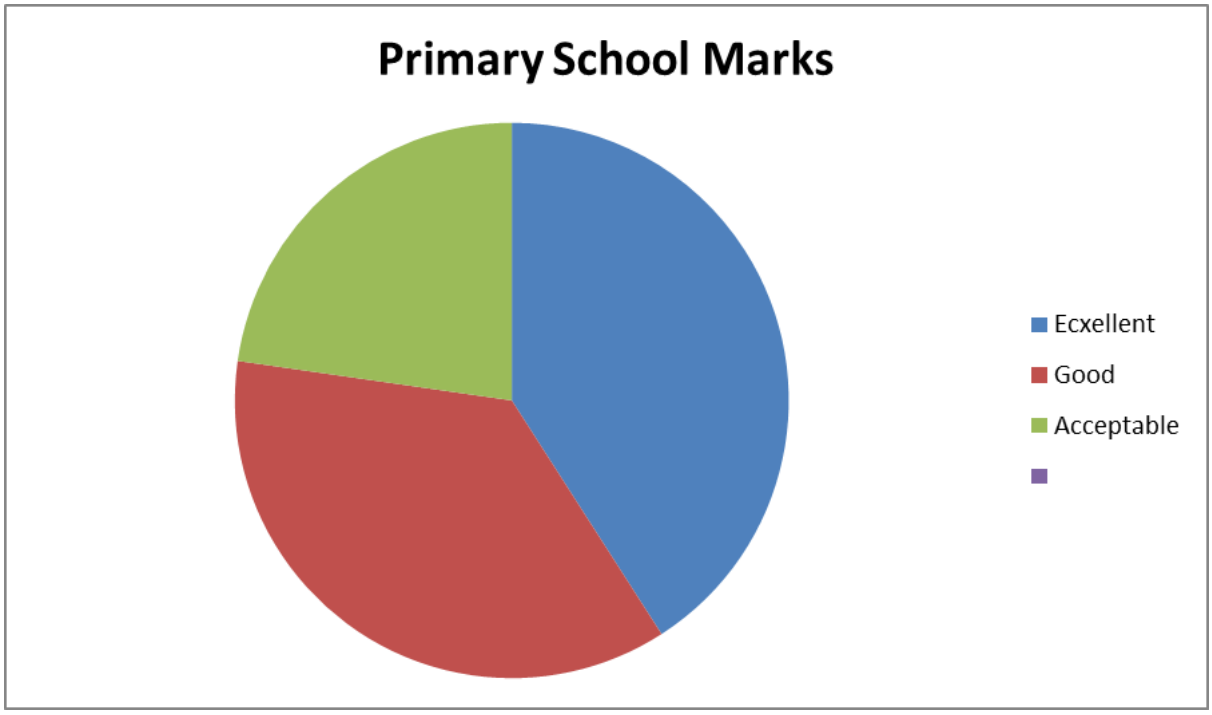
Presentation of the results of the first year middle school pupils:

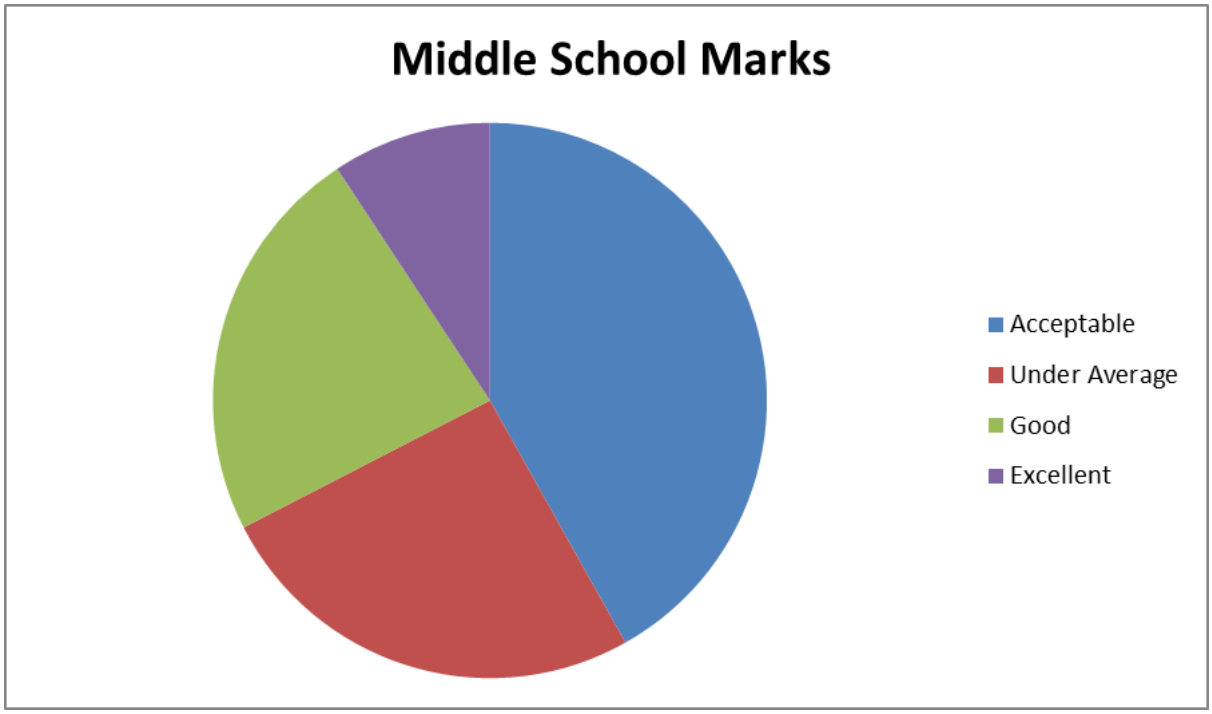
This table shows the percentage of the pupils' marks on the test.

Observation	Percentage
Under Average (from 6 to 9/20)	25.58 %
Acceptable (from 10 to 13/20)	41.86%
Good (from 14 to 16.5/20)	23.26%
Excellent (from 17 to 20/20)	9.30%

Table 2.2

Pupils took acceptable marks on the test (from 10 to 13), 25.58% under average, 23.26% did well and the lowest percentage 9.30 took excellent marks.





The diagrams present the difference between the obtained results of private primary school and first year middle school pupils' test. As illustrated in the diagram a significant difference is observed, the majority of private primary school pupils

scored excellent marks on the test (from 17 to 20). The rest of the pupils' performance was between good and acceptable. However, the highest percentage of middle school pupils took acceptable marks on the test (from 10 to 13), 25.58% under average, 23.26% did well and the lowest percentage 9.30 took excellent marks.

Presentation of the results of the students marks on each task:

Task 1:

This task is out of 4, and the table below shows the percentage of pupils who had less or more than 2 in the task of grammar

Pupils'marks	Percentage
from 0 to 2	59%
from 2 to 4	41%

Table 3.1

Pupils' marks	Percentage
from 0 to 2	44%
from 2 to 4	56%

Table 3.2

Results of task 1 show no significant difference between early and late learners, though the late learners achieved better results, the early learners' performance was good.

Task 2:

This table highlights the results of the writing task

Pupils' marks	Percentage
0 /4	4.54%
3 /4	27.27%
4/4	68,18%

Table 3.3

Pupils' marks	Percentage
1 /4	39.53%
2 /4	46.51%
4/4	13.95%

Table 3.4

According to the obtained results, 68.18% of private primary school students got the full mark of 4/4 on the writing task; however, only 13.95% of first year middle school students took 4/4.

Task 3:

This table presents the results of the phonetics task

Pupils' marks	Percentage
0 /4	4.54%
3 /4	27.27%
4/4	68,18%

Table 3.5

Pupils' marks	Percentage
0 /4	16.28%
1 /4	25.58%
2/4	16.28%
3/4	6.98%
4/4	11.63%

Table 3.6

Results of the phonetics section highlight a great difference between the two groups, the early starters scored excellent marks; however, the late starters' performance was mostly weak.

Task 4:

This table shows the results of vocabulary.

Pupils'marks	Percentage
2 /4	9.09%
3/4	54.54%
4/4	40.90%

Table 3.7

Pupils' marks	Percentage
1 /4	23.26%
2/4	34.88%
3/4	18.60%
4/4	23.26%

Table 3.8

Results of task 4 indicate better performance of early starters (private primary school students) in comparison to late starters (first year middle school students)

Task 5:

Pupils' marks	Percentage
0.5 /4	4.54%
2.5/4	13.63%
3/4	63.63%
4/4	18.18%

Table 3.9

Pupils' marks	Percentage
05/4	20.93%
1/4	39.56%
2/4	27.91%
3.5/4	11.63%

Table 3.10

Results of task 5 show a significant advantage in favour of private primary school pupils compared to first year middle school pupils.

This chapter included a description of the population, procedures and the instruments used to examine the hypotheses. After exhibiting data of the participants from the questionnaire administered to teachers and tests handed out to pupils (both primary and middle school), the coming section discussed the results analysed above with reference to the literature to better locate these findings in the body of research of the field of foreign language learning and teaching.

Chapter three:

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Discussion of the Findings:

This study aims to shed light on the importance of implementing English in Algerian primary schools. This part deals with the discussion of the findings and the relationship that can be found between them, the literature review, and the research questions.

The overall results of the exam show significant advantages for the early starters, especially in language literacy and vocabulary achievement. In the case of grammar, however, no significant differences were detected between the two age groups.

Is there a significant difference between Algerian learners who start learning English at the age of 5/6 as compared with those who start at the age of 11/ 12?

The results of the teachers' questionnaire revealed clear support for the hypothesis that there is a significant difference between Algerian learners who start learning English at the age of 5/6 as compared with those who start at the age of 11/ 12. The majority of teachers under study strongly agreed that the performance of pupils who start learning a foreign language at an earlier age (5/6) is better than those who start later (11/ 12). This resonated with Penfield and Roberts (1959) who reported the belief that the younger the child, the easier and better his performance would be.

These findings are complemented by the results of the students` test confirming the statement “the younger the better “. The majority of private primary school students scored excellent marks on the test (from 17 to 20). The rest of the pupils' performance was between good and acceptable. However, the highest percentage of middle school students took acceptable marks on the test (from 10 to

13), 25.58% under average, 23.26% did good and the lowest percentage 9.30 took excellent marks. The difference in the results might be linked to what Stern suggested: “Young learners are more profitable because they learn the language through intuitive skills”. It could be argued that primary school pupils acquired English in the same way a child would learn his mother tongue for they are exposed to it earlier.

To what extent is the achievement of these two groups differs in relation to linguistic properties of English (grammar, language literacy, vocabulary, and phonetics)?

Results of the grammar section show no significant difference between early and late learners, though, the late learners achieved better results, and the early learners' performance was good.

The results demonstrate that half of the teachers agreed that Students who start learning English at the ages of (11-12) are better at grammatical rules than younger ones (5-6 years) and the other half were either not sure or disagreed. However, according to Sharabidinovna et al (2020). "The best time to use the L2 grammar effectively is when the acquisition is before puberty. " Thus, early starters (5-6years) have higher chances of mastering grammatical rules after puberty.

Results of the writing section of the achievement test show a significant advantage in favour of the early starters, this study tends to support the common belief that the earlier the better in language learning (Johnson 1990; Newport, 1990; Brown, 1994).

Results of the vocabulary section indicate better performance of early starters , and half of the teachers under study agreed with the statement that young learners are better at acquiring vocabulary

Results of the phonetics section highlight a great difference between the two groups, the early starters scored excellent marks; however, the late starters' performance was mostly weak.

Are primary school pupils capable of learning two foreign languages at the same time?

The overall results of the primary school test support the hypothesis that Algerian pupils are capable of learning FFL and EFL simultaneously, according to the test results early starters took between good and excellent marks therefore the first foreign language (French) did not interfere with their performance in English

According to the questionnaire answers, there is no interference between FFL and EFL, the majority disagree that it is better for students to start a second foreign language after mastering the first foreign language and half of the teachers strongly agree that young students can learn two foreign languages at once (French and English in this case) and supported the statement that Learning EFL did not affect student performance in French.

These findings support the statement that EFL learning is more rapid and complete when it started at earlier ages (Asher & Garcia, 1969; Fathman 1975…etc).

Also support the findings of the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) of Penfield & Roberts who believed that: children acquire languages with ease before the age of 9.

In addition, these findings strongly support those of Al Dali (1997) who concluded that “children who began learning EFL in private school around age 5/6 scored higher in English achievement than did those who began learning English at ages 10/11 in public schools.

Conclusion:

To sum it all up, age is one of the most affecting factors that determine how an individual learns a foreign language. Hence, the present work was designed to investigate the significance of age in learning a foreign language.

The theoretical part of this research is divided into two chapters, the first chapter is dedicated to “Language Acquisition and Age “, and the second chapter to “the Critical Period Hypothesis “; this chapter highlights several studies in the second language acquisition literature that support the existence of a critical period in second language learning, and suggest a strong correlation between age and native-like attainment in a second language.

The findings of the practical part can show that the younger the learner, the better he is at acquiring EFL. The young learners scored higher and showed better achievement in linguistic properties, whereas late starters showed less achievement in general.

In conclusion, we found that the research findings support the claim that early starters (5/6) are better at learning EFL.

Significance of the Study:

This research might be helpful to several parts. On one hand, it is beneficial for young learners and their parents; our study may convince and motivate parents to enroll their children into English classes at an early age. On the other hand, this research might be a significant paper that the Algerian policymakers can refer to as supportive research to implement EFL at Algerian primary schools.

Limitations of the study:

There were several limitations in the study. First, there was a long delay in obtaining the authorization for the case study by the university administration.
The researchers were aiming to conduct an additional study on a different sample of middle school pupils, however due to the delay it was cancelled.
Second, students did not receive a clear response on their research topics.
There has also been a lack of resources and reliable data.

Recommendations:

This title is directed to future linguistics and didactics researchers, in addition to the Algerian ministry of education to take the necessary measures for including EFL in the Algerian primary school syllabus.

Future research should concentrate more on the importance of learning EFL at an early age.

Future researchers should take into consideration further studies on teaching EFL in kindergarten.

The public authorities should insert English in different domains, for instance: administrations, hospitals, airports … etc to support Algerian EFL speakers and learners.

It is very important to conduct studies on language interference (Arabic, French, and English) and its effects on learners.

Further studies should shed light on the appropriate pedagogies and methods of teaching the English language at Algerian primary schools.

The last recommendation is to suggest and research strategies for including English within the Algerian primary school curriculum.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Gender : (a) Male [ ] (b) Female [ ]
Age : (a) 20-30[ ] (b) 30-40 [ ] (c) More than 40 yrs [ ]
Qualifications: (a) Bachelor [ ] Master [ ] PhD [ ]
Experience : (a) Less than 5 [ ] (b) 5-10 (c) 1o-15 [ ] (d) More than 15 years [ ]

This questionnaire helps in the research to evaluate "Age Variables" in learning EFL at Elmaahed private school and Fodhil Babaali middle school for the completion of master degree. Can you, please, give your input by answering the following questions to contribute to this study?

Choose A, B, C, D or E. Answer according to how far you agree with each of them and write it in the box.
A: strongly agree B: agree C: not sure D: disagree E: strongly disagree

1- The performance of pupils who start learning EFL at the age of 11/12 is weak.

2- The performance of pupils who begin learning a foreign language at an earlier age (5/6) is better than those who start later (11/ 12).

3- Pupils who start learning English at the ages of (11-12) are better in grammatical rules than younger ones (5-6 years).

4- Adult learners are better than younger ones in reading skills

5- The younger pupils are, the better they will learn English.

6- Young learners speak English more fluently than adult learners.

7- The young pupils are much better than the adult ones in acquiring vocabulary.

8- The suitable age to start learning EFL is the age of 5-6.

9- The best age to start learning EFL is 11-12.

10- It is better for pupils to start a second foreign language after mastering the first foreign language

11- Young pupils can learn two foreign languages at once (French and English in this case)

12- Learning EFL affects student performance in French

Appendix 2. Primary Schools' English Test

Age [ ]

- **Have you studied English before middle school ? Yes / No**

Task 1: (4 Points)

I read and supply the capitalization and the punctuation

hi my name is rayan what is your name

what a beautiful day

Task 2: (4 points)

I help Sara to find the right word

(name ,respect, pupil, and)

My …….is Sara ,I am a good ……

I …….. my teachers…….. mates.

Task 3:(4 points)

I put the words in the right place:

Time ,name, six, middle, my, play

/ai/	/i/	/ei/

Task 4: Match each word the right picture



Task 5: I write a paragraph about me

(name, age, job, nationality, town, school).

ملخص :

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على تأثير العمر على القدرة على تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بين تلاميذ الطور الابتدائي في الجزائر. للإجابة على أسئلة البحث، قمنا بمقارنة فئتين عمريتين: التلاميذ الذين بدأوا في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية في السنة الأولى من الطور المتوسط والتلاميذ الذين بدأوا في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية في الطور الابتدائي. تم تحضير اختبار من أجل مقارنة مستوى المجموعتين في كل من المفردات, القواعد, القراءة والكتابة. كما تم توزيع استبيانات لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كجزء من الدراسة حيث طُلب منهم الإجابة على 12 سؤالاً. تم تحليل الردود باتباع منهجية التحليل الكمي.

أظهرت نتائج الاختبار أن مستوى المبتدئين المبكرين (تلاميذ المدارس الابتدائية) أفضل من مستوى المبتدئين المتأخرين (تلاميذ المتوسطة). علاوة على ذلك، جاءت نتائج استبيانات المعلمين متوافقة مع نتائج اختبار التلاميذ، و التي تشير إلى أن أداء تلاميذ المرحلة الابتدائية أفضل من أداء تلاميذ المرحلة المتوسطة بشكل عام. و من هذه النتائج توصلنا إلى أن تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية في سن مبكرة يمثل عامل رئيسي في تحسين قدرة تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية لدى التلاميذ.

الكلمات المفتاحية : اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية, مبتدئين مبكرين ,مبتدئين متأخرين.