

Methods of teaching a foreign language

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The history of scientific studies in the field of learning a foreign language has a long background. Maybe it can be claimed that the first efforts for learning a foreign language is found in Roman Empire. The translation of the Old Testament into Greek language in this period and also the translation of poems and literature of ancient Greece into Latin are evidences of this claim. From the third century B.C up to now, exchange of information has been the center of attention and learning foreign languages has always been considered as inevitable necessity for communication between different tribes and nations. What have attracted the attention of language experts are the similarities and differences between the acquisition of one's native language and his learning process of a foreign language.

The term "*language acquisition*" is used for the evolutionary developing process of human being's capabilities for acquiring skills of his mother tongue which is naturally formed during the first three years of every child's life. A 3-year old child can somehow have full verbal communication with those around him. This process is developed during the first years of primary school and the child is also equipped with the writing system of his mother language. So, it can be claimed that the child's language-acquisition is completely performed naturally and by verbal communication.

On the other hand, the term "*language learning*" is used when the process is directed consciously and under special method of education. Therefore, regarding language learning we achieve to a twofold classification. The first group consists of those children who are subject to both languages

simultaneously and under special ideal conditions, from early birth. In this case, the term "*first language*" is applied to the child's mother tongue and "*second language*" is used for the language which the child learns along and simultaneous with his mother tongue. These children almost equally learn both languages and are called bilinguals.

Second group includes all persons- i.e., children, adults, and grown ups- who under special conditions and by using methods of education learn a "*foreign language*". In this article, the second group of learners is paid attention to, and different methods of teaching a foreign language are considered.