

Acquisition of languages of emergent fossilization in different perspectives

[Education](#)



The paper "Acquisition of Languages of Emergent Fossilization in Different Perspectives" is a perfect example of an essay on education. Brian MacWhinney has examined the etiology of fossilization effects with the age of acquisition regarding the second language. He evaluated ten proposals against the whole range of age-related effects in language learning, including not only fossilization but also earlier changes throughout the lifespan. The ten proposals that he has evaluated are the lateralization hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967), the neural commitment hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967), the parameter-setting hypothesis (Flynn, 1996), the metabolic hypothesis (Pinker, 1994), the reproductive fitness hypothesis (Hurford & Kirby, 1999), the aging hypothesis (Barkow, Cosmides, & Tooby, 1992), the fragile rule hypothesis (Birdsong, in press), the starting small hypothesis (Elman, 1993), the entrenchment hypothesis (Marchman, 1992), and the entrenchment and balance hypothesis (MacWhinney, in press). A fossilized system means that a second language learner would never develop his second language skill in the same manner, as in the same pronunciation as that of the language that he is studying. Examples of this would be Japanese, Korean, Chinese or Russian nationalities with the English language as their second language but the diction and tones of their native language are the ones that they are still able to manifest, meaning they have not acquired the "tongue" of the west. He has noted that the age of acquisition regarding the second language has a correlation with the time an immigrant arrives in a new country and begins serious exposure to the secondary language. He stipulated that it is the age of acquisition regarding second language rather than the length of residency that has a strong effect

on the achievement of native-like proficiency in the second language that he has studied. He has presented an equal consideration of neurological, psychological, physiological, and sociological determinants of localized fossilization. Although his account correctly predicts the overall gradual decline in second language learning, it fails to predict the diversity of fossilization patterns we see among older learners. To account for these additional effects, there still needs to be studies conducted on the effects of social stratification on older immigrants and the extent to which they can use compensatory strategies to combat the effects of entrenchment.

(MacWhinney)