

УДК: 371.38

Изучение языков различными возрастными группами

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Аннотация. В настоящее время тема изучения языков людьми различных возрастных групп особо актуальна, так как глобализация и международные процессы затрагивают все сферы нашего общества: экономику, политику, культуру, и т.д. Знание иностранного языка является необходимостью нашего времени. В данной статье представлены различные методы изучения иностранных языков. Мы также определили основные характеристики изучения языков различными возрастными группами, а именно взрослыми, молодежью и детьми. Авторы статьи провели небольшой опрос среди студентов вуза и выяснили основные причины изучения иностранных языков, методы, которыми они пользуются при изучении, а также проблемы, которые возникают перед различными возрастными группами. Студенты также ответили на вопрос, в каком возрасте лучше всего начинать изучение иностранных языков и эффективно ли изучение языка в более преклонном возрасте. Изучение иностранного языка в школе обусловлено учебной программой, тогда как взрослые начинают изучать иностранные языки по желанию. Для них освоение новой информации – проблема, а для детей нет. Процесс обучения требует много терпения и усилий от детей, но они должны знать, что полученные знания пригодятся им в будущем.

Ключевые слова: иностранные языки, характер обучения, возрастные группы, методы, образование

UDC: 371.38

Learning Languages by Different Age Groups

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Abstract. Nowadays the topic of learning languages by people of different age groups is especially relevant, since globalization and international processes affect all spheres of society: the economy, politics, culture, etc. Knowledge of the language is really becoming a necessity today. The article presents a variety of methods for learning foreign languages. Also, we identified the features of learning foreign languages by different age groups: adults, youth and children. We conducted a survey among students and found out why they learn languages, what method of study they most often use, what difficulties arise when they learn foreign languages. The students also shared their opinion at what age it is better to start learning foreign languages and whether it is effective to learn them at a more mature age. The study of a foreign language at school took place at the request of the educational program, and not at will. For an adult, new information will be more difficult, since the child thinks more about learning, rather than problems. The learning process requires a lot of patience and effort, but this knowledge will be useful to you in the future.

Keywords: foreign languages, features of the study, age groups, methods, education

Introduction.

The topic of learning foreign languages by different age groups was partially studied by scientists from the University of Cambridge – Cameron L [4], and also Ghasemi B., Hashemi M. [5], Efimova R. M [1], Zhuravleva V.V [2], Pfeiffer S. A. [3]. Nowadays, the topic of language learning by children, teenagers, youth and adults is especially relevant, because globalization and international processes affect all spheres of society: the economy, politics, culture, etc. Knowledge of the language is becoming a necessity today.

The purpose of our research is to highlight the features of language learning by different age groups and confirm the validity of these features.

To achieve this purpose, we set the following tasks:

1. Study the material for each sub-topic of the project (language learning by children, teenagers, youth and adults);
2. Summarize and systematize our conclusions on the studied material;
3. Create and conduct a survey among students of 1-2 years of University of Tyumen;
4. Compare the results of the research of predecessors and the results of our survey.

Materials and methods.

Our research was based on the research papers of Cameron L [4], Ghasemi B., Hashemi M [5], Pfeiffer S. A. [3], Zhuravleva V.V [2] and R. M. Efimova [1]. In our research, we used a comparative method and a survey method. We asked a few questions and tried to answer them using the results of our study.

What is the difference between teaching children a foreign language and teaching teenagers or adults?

There is a big difference. Firstly, babies have an amazing ability to absorb the information. Secondly, children show more enthusiasm when they learn something, they are interested in the process of learning new things. Thirdly, they want to do something to get the teacher to praise them, to please them. Fourth, they can devote almost all their time to learning the language. Fifth, when children learning a foreign language, they learn to speak it, they feel calmer and freer than adult students. This allows them to get a more natural accent.

Introducing a child to a foreign language at an early age allows them to develop their cognitive functions, helping to form and expand thinking at its most flexible stage. Children are great for learning a foreign language. Learning a foreign language at a young age is as easy as learning your first native language.

However, children can quickly lose interest. They may not be motivated to learn the language for a long time, because many children learn the language at the request of their parents. It is difficult to explain to a child that knowledge of foreign languages will help him in the future in various spheres of life.

Many experts believe that learning a language by a child under the age of ten allows them to speak fluently and correctly, as in their native language. Therefore, the sooner a child learns a foreign language, the more probability it is that they will speak it fluently. Nevertheless, learning a language other than your native language can provide a lifelong ability to communicate more with native speakers.

What problems do young people face when learning a foreign language?

Nowadays learning a foreign language at school, colleges and institutes involves the use of a communication approach to learning. In other words, the main goal of training is to teach people to speak a foreign language. The problem is that most of the time in class is devoted not to speaking and listening, but to writing grammar tasks. By doing grammar tasks, a student learns to perform grammar tasks according to a certain scheme, but not to speak the language.

Teenagers spend a lot of time on learning to do exercises, so they are not good at reproducing the constructions they have learned in speech. This raises the problem of the language barrier - the fear of showing your gaps in the language. To overcome the language barrier means to eliminate the lack of speaking, which does not disappear immediately, but as the speaker begins to feel more confident communicating with other people.

The second problem is a huge amount of information that you need not only to remember, but also to bring its reproduction to automatism. Learning words is only a small part of learning. You need to know the compatibility of words. This is much more difficult, because the learning process is usually based on the native language, and its construction does not always coincide with the foreign language. What's even harder is learning to think in language. This comes only with experience and after very long communication.

One of the main problems that teachers face is that most students don't have the proper level of motivation. Unfortunately, the English language is perceived by students of non-linguistic educational institutions as a secondary subject. Therefore, one of the tasks is to form students' motivation to learn a language.

Learning a foreign language should not take place separately from the formation of the professional competence of a future specialist. Foreign language tools are designed to provide a reliable language platform and serve as a career incentive.

Why do people learn a foreign language as adults?

Today, a huge number of adults start learning foreign languages in adulthood. This is due to the deep international processes of social liberalization taking place in the world, the expansion of international trade and opportunities for cooperation with foreign partners in the field of economy, politics, culture, and the growth of tourism.

However, adults experience increased difficulties in learning a foreign language, which is mainly due to the existing unsuccessful previous experience of learning a foreign language and high requirements for the duration of training.

Adult education should be treated differently from that of children. According to psychologists, with age, the indicators of logical memory improve compared to mechanical, but the indicators of short-term memory become worse.

We identified the following features of learning languages by adults:

1. An adult learner is aware of himself as an independent, self-governing person and has a great life experience, including educational experience.
2. Adult students are more motivated than children and teenagers. They are psychologically attuned to get the planned result and are more aware of the need for language in their lives.
3. Adult learners need urgent application of their knowledge and skills in everyday and professional life. For its implementation, role-playing games and simulations of real-life situations are used in the classroom. This significantly speeds up the use of the language in practice.
4. An adult learner shows increased requirements to the quality and learning outcomes. To create optimal comfort conditions in the learning process, you should strive for natural informal communication, which is characterized by friendly participation, emotional responsiveness and attention to the interlocutor.

What methods of language learning are typical for different age groups?

Many people learn foreign languages, as they know how important it is in the modern world. Some learn English, others - French and German. There are people who like learning rare or extinct languages, such as Latin, Sanskrit. Those, who study languages, they understand that it makes them smarter, broadens their mind and gives basic knowledge of linguistic structure. This people become more observant and decisive. And, it goes without saying that these people have better communicational skills.

Results.

According to the results of our research, the majority of respondents (93%) believe that the best time to learn a foreign language is childhood (from babyhood to 10 years old). Only 5% of the respondents think that it is more reasonable to learn languages at a later age. Finally, 2% of the respondents say that it is good to start learning a language at any age. These results allow us to conclude that the opinions of respondents and scientists, who explore the features of language learning by different age groups, coincide (Fig. 1).

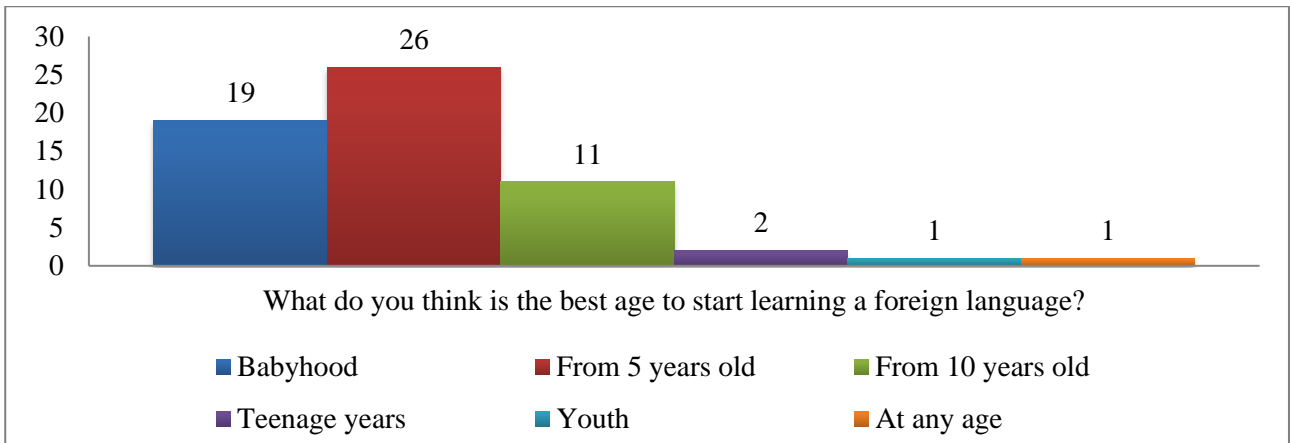


Fig. 1

The research showed that the majority of the respondents (43%) think that children do not have problems in learning languages, because they have a good memory. 16% of the respondents name flexible thinking as the main reason why children are good at learning languages, and 15% compare children with an empty vessel that is easily filled with knowledge. Only 4% of respondents did not agree with the statement, saying that children are different, not everyone can learn a foreign language, and 18% found it difficult to answer. The results allow us to conclude that the opinion of the majority of respondents and scientists, who study the features of language learning by different age groups, also coincide (Fig. 2).

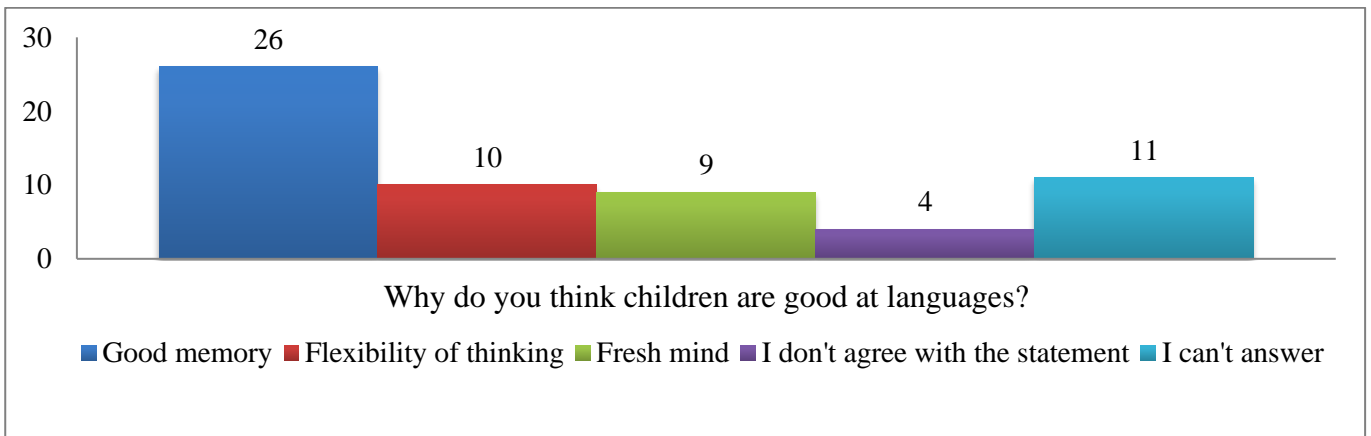


Fig. 2

The respondents point out that the lack of knowledge is the main problem for learning a foreign language. 25 people said that they had no difficulties. 5 people said that they experienced difficulties in the system of teaching at the University. 10 students claim that teaching at University is poor (Fig. 3).

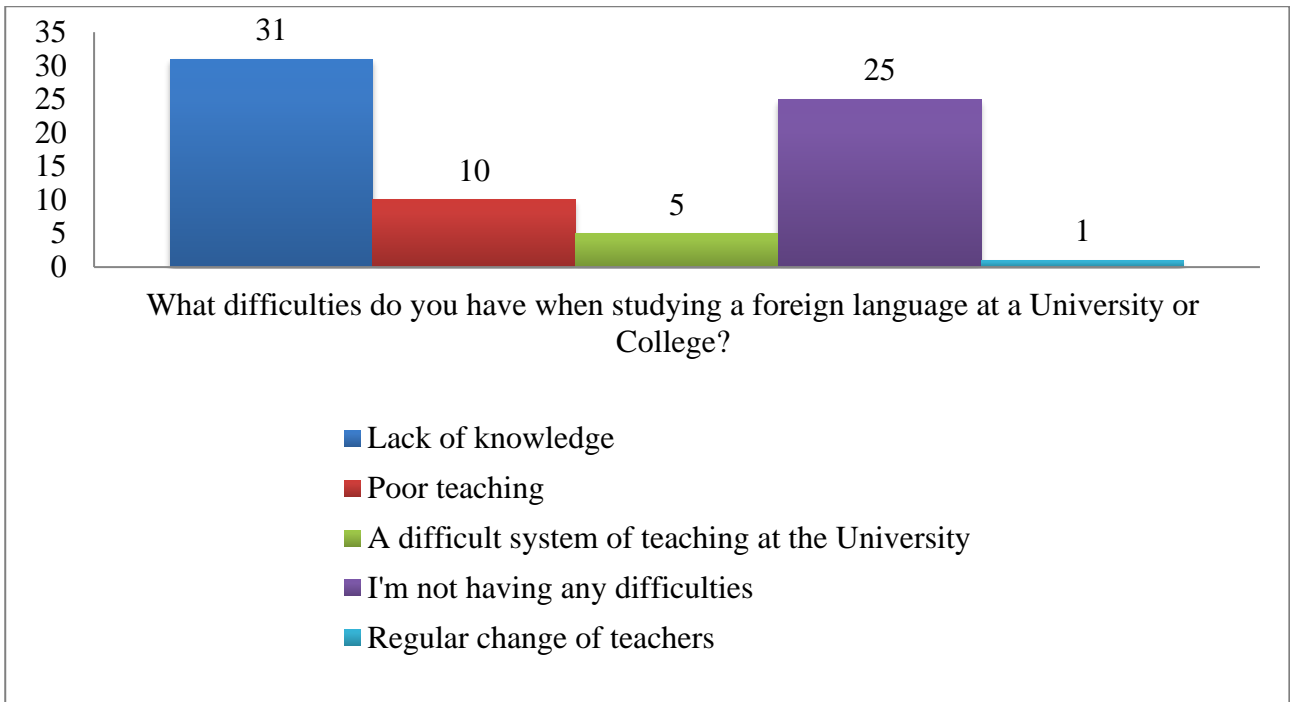


Fig. 3

According to the results of our research, the majority of the respondents agree that a foreign language will help them in their future profession (Fig. 4).

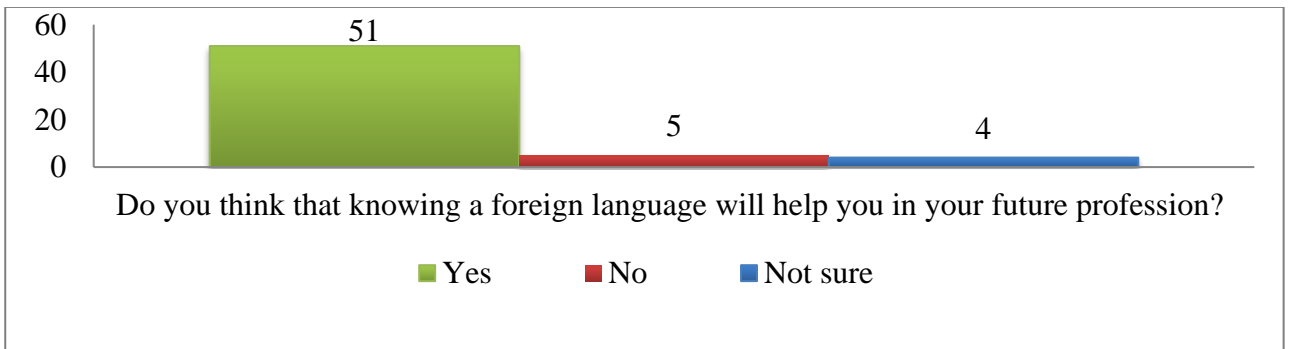


Fig. 4

Most of the respondents think that it is necessary to study foreign languages. But some people suppose that in some areas foreign languages are not necessary because their professional activity will be connected with something else. 6 people noted that students should learn another language at will (Fig. 5).

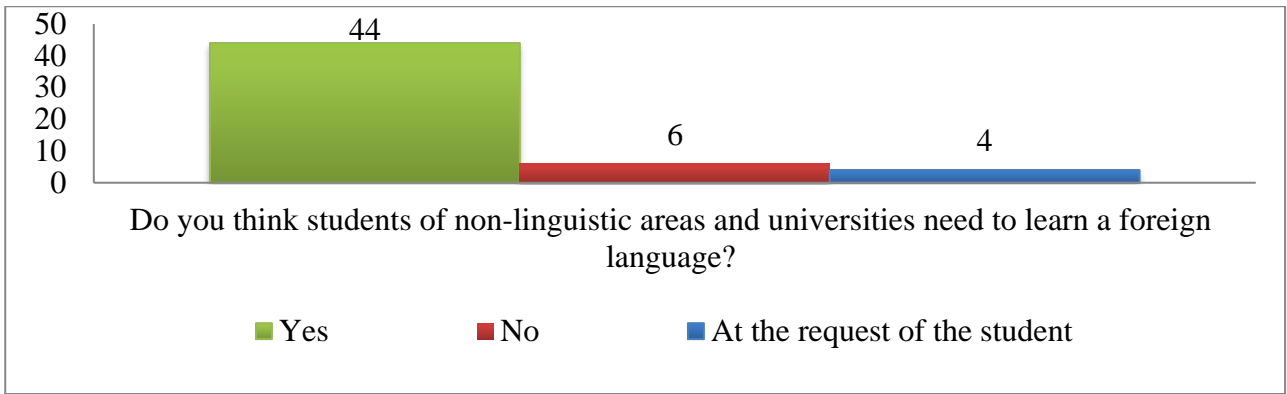


Fig. 5

Most respondents agree that languages can be learned by adults (Fig. 6). Also, they would not mind starting to learn a foreign language in adulthood (Fig.7). Adults often have some difficulties in learning languages due to their previous experience and high requirements for the duration of training. However, they have a number of advantages over children and adolescents. They are more motivated, on their own, learning a new language from their own motives.

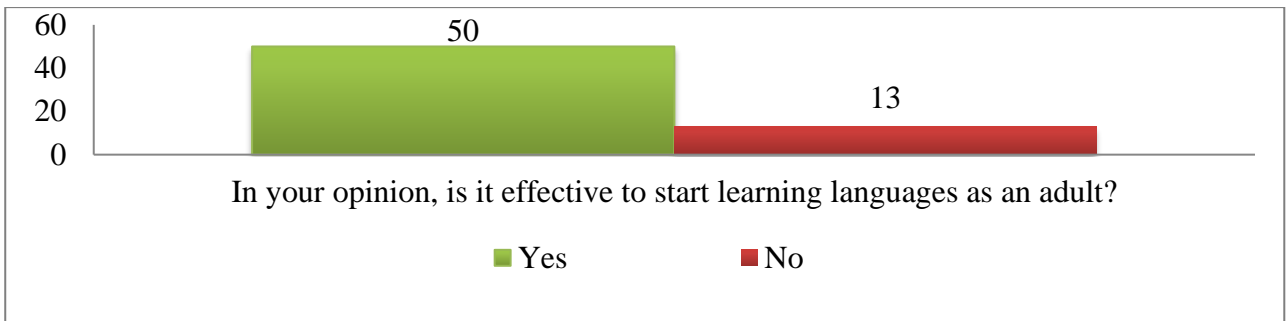


Fig. 6

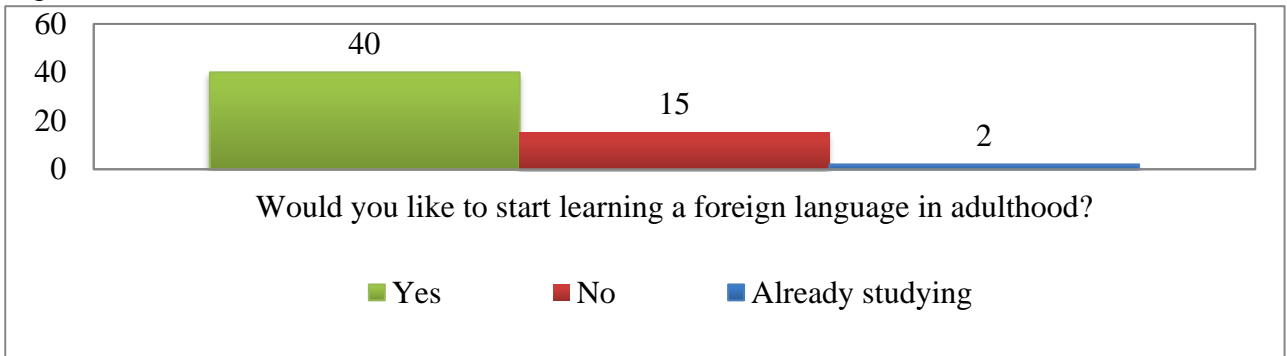


Fig. 7

All the students use their own methods of learning foreign languages. We presented them in Figure 8. Most respondents use the so-called visualization method. In second place, according to the survey, are reading books and watching movies in a foreign language. The method of memorization is used the least, and this is good, because memorization is not the best method of learning foreign

languages, because when we learn a language, we need to understand the essence of what we say and what we hear. And memorizing does not give us a proper understanding of the language.

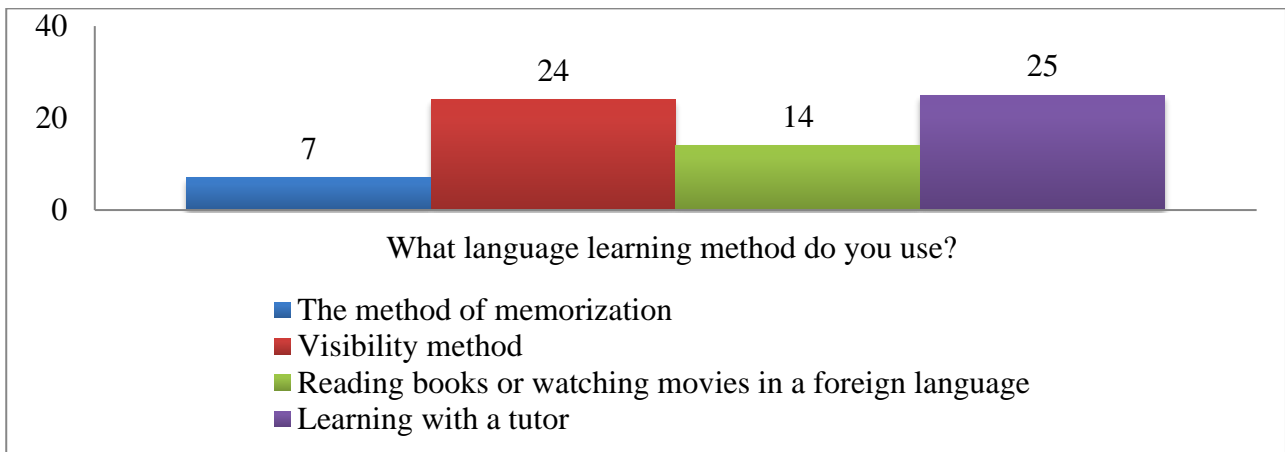


Fig. 8

Most of the respondents study languages for study, in second place is learning languages as a hobby. An equal number of respondents study languages for general development and for work (Fig. 9).

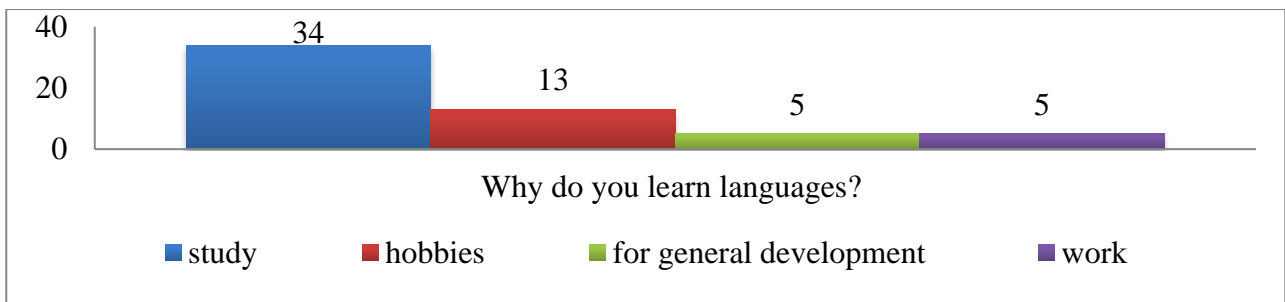


Fig. 9

Based on the results of our research, we prepared a few recommendations for those who want to learn a foreign language effectively and easily. They are the following:

1. Learn every day.

Professional teachers and polyglots agree that short but daily classes are more effective than long but rare ones. Better every day for 20 minutes than one day a week for 2 hours. Stability pays off. Make the practice of learning a language a habit. This method is suitable for both adults and children.

2. Read books in a foreign language.

It is better to read special adapted books first. Adapted books are books in a foreign language with interlinear translation of sentences. This is the so-called "parallel reading" method. Reading such books is very effective. This method is suitable for both adults and children. But it is better for an adult to be with the child while reading and help the child understand difficult words.

3. Watch movies, TV series or cartoons in the target language.

The advantage is that many people simply prefer to watch a movie than read a book. For a start, it is better to watch films with subtitles and translations, so you will learn to perceive the language by ear. This method is suitable for both adults and children.

4. Listen to music to learn a language.

Listen to your favorite music in the target language and watch the translation. The advantage of this method is that new words from songs are very tightly hammered into the memory. A favorite song has a strong effect on our emotions, which can be used to learn the language. The method is suitable for everyone.

5. Listen to podcasts.

The advantage is that in this case you learn the language the way small children do. When a child begins to speak, he does not know grammar rules, but subconsciously understands how to speak correctly, because for several years in a row he listens to a speech. Therefore, it is worth saying that the more you listen to a foreign speech, the better. It's good if you choose the files for this by the complexities that are closest to your level of proficiency. The method is suitable for everyone.

6. Sticker method.

The essence of the method is simple: you stick stickers with words on the objects they represent. It is best to do this where you are most often: at home, in the office, or maybe in the passenger compartment. Or write different words on stickers and glue them on the desktop, refrigerator, doors. Repeat the words when you see these stickers. The method is suitable for everyone.

7. Find a pen pal.

With the development of social media, finding a native speaker of a foreign language is not that difficult, so you can find such a person and ask him to communicate with you in a foreign language. The method is more suitable for adults, because it is not very good when a child communicates on the Internet with an unfamiliar person.

8. Hire a tutor or buy online courses. The method is suitable for everyone.

Conclusion.

The results of the study showed that language learning remains relevant today. Now at the age of globalization, knowledge of a foreign language increases the chances to become successful. Therefore, people from different age groups are interested in studying it. People of all ages pursue different goals, they use their own methods and ways of learning a language, which makes it important to study this problem scientifically.

So, after a survey among students, it became clear that for young people, learning a language also plays an important role in their lives. Even now they are learning a foreign language for future work, for general development, in order to apply it in life. Many students noted that it is better to start learning a language in childhood, but also in adulthood it is possible to implement it. Today, a modern person who knows another language is able to freely get acquainted with foreign literature, cinema and culture in the original language, travel around the world and meet interesting people. This makes his life brighter and more interesting.

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