

# Unlocking Potential: Navigating CLT for Adolescent English Learners in Egyptian Public Schools

Dr. Abdelhamid Helmy Safa (Corresponding author)

Dept. of TESOL and Linguistics, Institute of the Pacific United (IPU) Tertiary Institute

57 Aokautere Drive, Fitzherbert, Palmerston North 4410, New Zealand

Received: May 26, 2024

Accepted: June 20, 2024

Published: June 24, 2024

doi:10.5296/ijele.v12i2.22013

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v12i2.22013>

## Abstract

This study critically analyzes the intricate relationship between age and Second Language Acquisition (SLA), particularly within the framework of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. Recent research challenges conventional views on the optimal age for language acquisition, highlighting the diverse factors influencing learning across different life stages. Insights from contemporary studies offer a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted aspects shaping language acquisition, prompting a reevaluation of age-related concepts in SLA. Utilizing a mixed-method approach integrating literature review and personal reflection through autoethnography, the study investigates the complex dynamics between age and SLA within CLT frameworks in Egyptian government schools. It aims to offer valuable insights and implications for instructional practices tailored to adolescent English language learners in this context, including an examination of specific challenges and opportunities within the Egyptian secondary school EFL setting. The review concludes by exploring new perspectives on the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) and its implications for instructional practices in CLT-based environments for adolescent English language learners in Egyptian government schools.

**Keywords:** adolescent language learners, communicative language teaching (CLT), Egyptian public education, language acquisition outcomes, second language acquisition (SLA)

## 1. Introduction

### *1.1 The Problem*

During the researcher's tenure as a qualified English teacher for secondary students, the prevailing notion was that language instructors served as the primary source of information, while students were primarily tasked with receiving new language knowledge. Drawing from this experience and my firsthand encounters as both a learner and educator in Egypt's educational landscape, where I taught English as a Foreign Language (EFL) before transitioning to academia in New Zealand, this review delves into the intricacies of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), particularly within an EFL framework.

By navigating through the challenges and successes of language learning within Egypt's diverse educational setting, I bring a distinctive perspective molded by personal encounters in language acquisition and teaching. This review aims to combine personal insights with scholarly inquiry to illuminate the multifaceted dynamics of language acquisition, emphasizing the significance of contextual elements in shaping language learning outcomes for adolescent English language learners in Egyptian government schools. A particular focus is placed on examining the impact of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) within this context.

### *1.2 Importance of the Problem*

Understanding the influence of age on language learning within the framework of CLT in Egyptian government schools is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, the need to improve English proficiency among students in a globalized world where English serves as a lingua franca cannot be overstated. This research seeks to address inconsistencies in previous findings regarding age-related language acquisition, thereby contributing to a clearer understanding of how different age groups respond to CLT methods.

### *1.3 Relevant Scholarship*

Previous studies have explored various dimensions of SLA, highlighting factors such as age, motivation, and instructional methods. However, there is a scarcity of research focusing specifically on the Egyptian context and the implementation of CLT in government schools. This review builds on existing literature, recognizing the contributions of earlier works while aiming to fill the gap regarding the specific challenges faced by adolescent learners in Egypt.

### *1.4 Hypotheses and Correspondence to Research Design*

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How does age influence language learning in Egyptian government schools, particularly within the framework of CLT?
2. What are the specific challenges faced by adolescent English learners in Egyptian government secondary schools regarding the adoption of CLT methods?
3. How can pedagogical approaches be adapted to overcome these challenges and enhance language learning outcomes for adolescent English learners in this setting?

The primary hypothesis suggests that younger learners will show more significant improvement in language acquisition through CLT compared to older adolescents. Secondary hypotheses include the identification of specific socio-cultural and educational barriers that hinder the effectiveness of CLT and proposing targeted pedagogical strategies to address these barriers.

The research design employs a mixed-method approach that integrates literature review and personal reflection through autoethnography. This methodology allows for a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics at play, providing robust data to support the study's hypotheses and objectives. The next section details this research design.

## **2. Methodology and Theoretical Framework**

### *2.1 Approach*

This study employs a mixed-method approach that integrates a systematic literature review (SLR) with personal reflections through autoethnography. The SLR involves identifying, selecting, and critically evaluating research to answer well-defined questions, as outlined by Dewey and Drahota (2016). Autoethnography, as described by Adams et al. (2016), uses personal experiences to interpret cultural texts, experiences, beliefs, and practices.

### *2.2 Systematic Literature Review*

The SLR was conducted using academic databases such as Google Scholar and ERIC, focusing on keywords like "Second Language Acquisition (SLA)," "age and SLA," "CLT," "EFL settings," and "Egyptian government schools." The process followed the guidelines of Siddaway et al. (2019) and Shurovi et al. (2024), emphasizing the identification of key themes, theoretical frameworks, and empirical findings related to age and SLA within Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) contexts.

### *2.3 Theoretical Framework*

This study is grounded in several well-established theories of SLA and CLT, providing a comprehensive framework for analysis. Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the role of social interaction and cultural context in language learning, offering insight into how students in Egyptian public schools acquire English through social interactions facilitated by CLT (Gass et al., 2020; Lantolf, 2023; Vygotsky, 2012).

The Interaction Hypothesis highlights the importance of interaction in the language acquisition process, crucial for CLT methodologies that rely on communicative practice among students (Long, 1981; Namaziandost & Nasri, 2019). The Input Hypothesis underscores the significance of comprehensible input in language acquisition, aligning with CLT's focus on meaningful communication (Alwazir & Shukri, 2016; Krashen, 1979). The Output Hypothesis emphasizes the role of language production in developing proficiency, assessing the effectiveness of CLT methods in promoting language use and proficiency (Qasserras, 2023; Swain, 1985). These

theories collectively provide a robust framework for understanding the dynamics of language acquisition in the context of Egyptian public schools.

#### *2.4 Autoethnography*

Autoethnography provided a unique lens to explore the development of language teachers and learners, incorporating personal narratives and observations from experiences within Egypt's educational landscape (Keleş, 2022; Kessler, 2024). These insights illuminated the contextual intricacies and challenges in SLA within Egyptian government secondary schools, particularly focusing on CLT methodologies (Peña-Pincheira, 2023).

### **3. Literature Review**

#### *3.1 Navigating the Age Spectrum in Second Language Acquisition*

Decades of scholarly inquiry have investigated the potential impact of age on SLA, revealing a dynamic and evolving discourse within the field. Insights from this research stress the complexity of individual differences, highlighting the need for further investigation and thoughtful approaches in education. Optimal language instruction may require a tailored, individualized approach that recognizes and addresses the diverse spectrum of strengths and challenges inherent in learners across different age groups, ultimately leading to enhanced language learning outcomes.

Hoang (2021) investigates the impact of motivation on SLA, shedding light on gender distinctions in how learners approach language learning and emphasizing the varying levels of engagement across different age brackets. Cook (2016) posits that children exhibit prowess in certain linguistic domains, while adults harness cognitive advantages that contribute to sustained proficiency. Wu (2022) explores the notion that "younger is better" in educational settings, acknowledging the multifaceted nature of SLA and the need for nuanced consideration of individual contexts and variables at play in language learning environments.

Similarly, Larsen-Freeman and Long (2014) underscore the unique strengths of adult learners, such as metacognitive awareness and refined learning strategies. Building upon these insights, Ortega (2014) highlights the varied nature of individual language learning experiences, suggesting that adults often display notable resilience and adaptability, which contribute to long-term progress in SLA. Research by Hashim et al. (2018) underscores the significance of metacognitive strategies employed by adult learners in enhancing their proficiency over time.

These studies collectively illustrate the importance of considering age-related factors in SLA. Children may have certain advantages in language learning due to their cognitive flexibility and capacity for acquiring new sounds and structures. In contrast, adults bring a wealth of life experience and strategic learning techniques that can facilitate language acquisition. Recognizing these differences allows educators to design and implement more effective language instruction strategies tailored to the needs of learners at different stages of life.

### *3.2 Understanding Early Language Acquisition Dynamics*

Building upon the nuanced comprehension of age-related language acquisition dynamics, the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) posits a significant phase in early childhood, typically spanning from ages two to twelve, where language acquisition may confer advantages (Azieb, 2021). Initially introduced by Lenneberg (1967), this hypothesis aligns with observed increases in neural plasticity, facilitating language absorption. Lenneberg emphasizes the importance of exposure and engagement during this period in fostering language development. However, uncertainties may arise due to the ambiguity surrounding the precise age of lateralization, a key aspect of brain development, which raises doubts about the neurological basis of the CPH (Nejadansari & Nasrollahzadeh, 2011).

Expanding upon the research landscape, recent scholarly investigations delve into the intricate relationship between age and second language proficiency. Abdukadyrova and Suyunova (2019) lend support to the CPH, indicating a specific window for language acquisition, particularly observed in younger learners. Yang's (2019) review suggests that the onset age may influence proficiency, with younger learners often exhibiting higher levels. Despite acknowledging the advantages of early exposure for children, research underscores adolescents' apparent aptitude for acquiring a second language (L2) and the enriched linguistic experiences they encounter.

Aoghala's (2021) study in Libya emphasizes the advantages of early language exposure, particularly for children in countries where English is the first language. This suggests that early exposure to language can be beneficial, regardless of the country's linguistic environment. Contrary to conventional beliefs, initiating language learning at an older age, especially in foreign language contexts, can also yield effective results, as suggested by Aoghala. This challenges the notion that younger age is always better for language acquisition and underscores the potential effectiveness of later language learning.

Hartshorne et al. (2018) conducted an extensive study highlighting age-related influences on L2 syntactic learning ability. They propose that language acquisition between ages 10 and 12 may offer an optimal pathway to native-level proficiency, with gains diminishing after age 17. This research indicates a notable learning curve during initial language acquisition, suggesting the existence of a critical period for language acquisition, albeit potentially extending beyond previously presumed onset ages.

Cadierno et al. (2020) complement these findings by investigating the impact of age of onset on English proficiency among Danish school children. Their study compares early starters (ES) introduced to English in 1st grade with late starters (LS) in 3rd grade over three years. Interestingly, LS generally outperform ES, especially in grammar, which challenges the assumption that earlier is always better in language learning. The research underscores the complexities of language learning across age groups and educational settings, highlighting the need for tailored teaching methods to address individual learning differences and proficiency levels among young learners.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1 Advancing English Language Learning in Egyptian Secondary Education Context

In Egypt's educational landscape, English instruction has been a priority since its mandate from primary school in 2003/2004 (El-Araby et al., 2012). English remains a crucial subject through secondary education, which typically spans ages 15 to 18 (Ministry of Education (MOE), 2014). This period is critical for students' academic and linguistic development. Recognizing the importance of linguistic proficiency in a globalized context, the Egyptian government has implemented several educational reforms. The introduction of the *"Hello! English for Secondary Schools: Year One, Year Two, and Year Three Series"* in 2008-2009 aims to enhance students' language skills, critical thinking, and study habits, promoting effective communication and comprehension in both spoken and written English.

Egypt's ongoing efforts to improve English language instruction reflect a strategic initiative to equip students with essential linguistic skills, critical thinking abilities, and communicative competence for success in a globalized society. However, the effective implementation of communicative approaches remains challenging in the Egyptian EFL context, especially for adolescent learners. To address these challenges, a deeper theoretical understanding and practical application of established SLA and CLT theories are necessary.

Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the role of social interaction and cultural context in language learning, positing that language development occurs through interaction within a cultural context (Gass et al., 2020; Lantolf, 2023; Vygotsky, 2012). In Egyptian secondary schools, where students may lack exposure to English outside the classroom, integrating sociocultural principles into the curriculum can facilitate meaningful communicative exchanges that promote language acquisition.

The Interaction Hypothesis highlights the importance of interaction in the language acquisition process, essential for communicative language teaching (CLT) methodologies that rely on student interaction and communication (Long, 1981; Namaziandost & Nasri, 2019). Creating opportunities for authentic communication through pair and group activities can enhance Egyptian learners' practical language skills and deepen their engagement with the language.

The Input Hypothesis underscores the significance of comprehensible input in language acquisition, aligning with CLT's focus on meaningful communication (Alwazir & Shukri, 2016; Krashen, 1979). This hypothesis suggests that learners acquire language best when exposed to input slightly beyond their current proficiency level ( $i+1$ ). Providing students with rich, varied, and contextually appropriate English input can facilitate better language acquisition in the Egyptian EFL context.

The Output Hypothesis emphasizes the role of language production in developing proficiency, involving students actively using the language to communicate (Qasserras, 2023; Swain, 1985). Encouraging students to produce spoken and written English in meaningful contexts helps internalize and consolidate their learning, making CLT methods particularly effective in promoting language use and proficiency.



Despite these theoretical foundations, practical application of communicative competence—understanding and applying language and non-verbal communication rules effectively in various contexts (Ahmed & Pawar, 2018)—remains a challenge. The restructuring of Egypt's educational system into three stages demonstrates a commitment to enhancing instructional quality, with secondary education serving as a crucial juncture for students' academic and linguistic development.

To implement these theoretical principles effectively, several practical considerations must be addressed. This includes training teachers to adopt CLT methodologies, creating supportive classroom environments that encourage interaction and communication, and developing materials that provide comprehensible and engaging input. Additionally, addressing systemic issues such as class sizes, resource availability, and examination pressures is essential for fostering an environment conducive to communicative language learning.

Integrating these theoretical insights into practice can help Egyptian secondary education navigate the complexities of language instruction. Emphasizing social interaction, meaningful input, and active language use will create a more dynamic and effective English language learning environment, ultimately equipping students with the skills needed for success in a globalized world.

## **5. Implications for Adolescent English Language Learners in Egyptian Secondary Education**

Navigating the evolving landscape of English language instruction in Egyptian government schools, especially for adolescent learners, poses notable challenges. Insights from El-Fiki (2012) and Latif and Mahmoud (2012) highlight the difficulties in integrating communicative activities and the traditional emphasis on grammar and vocabulary in Egyptian EFL government secondary schools. El-Fiki emphasizes hurdles stemming from a teacher-centered approach and advocates for tailored reforms, while Latif and Mahmoud stress the necessity for pedagogical adjustments. These findings collectively underscore the need for targeted reforms to enhance language learning outcomes.

Badr's (2022) research investigates the effects of task-based instruction on speaking skills, revealing both favorable outcomes and hurdles in implementing CLT. These findings suggest potential conflicts between CLT principles, which emphasize oral and written skills, and traditional exam structures prioritizing comprehension and recognition. Despite discussions surrounding CLT and its promotion of practical language skills, it appears that Egyptian EFL secondary government school teachers continue to rely heavily on traditional approaches (Khalil et al., 2019; Tayel, 2021). These approaches typically prioritize explicit grammar instruction and repetitive exercises aimed at assessing language comprehension and recognition to ensure grammatical accuracy (Darwish, 2016; Ibrahim & Ibrahim, 2017).

In line with the perspectives of several scholars (Dos Santos, 2020; Ellis, 2015), it becomes apparent that prioritizing implicit grammar instruction and communication is notably favorable, particularly for adolescent learners in the context of EFL settings (Nisha, 2024). Integrating

grammar and vocabulary instruction into CLT presents promising avenues for enhancing engagement among adolescent learners. These investigations should delve into innovative strategies that prioritize activities teaching grammar communicatively.

This imperative stems from the acknowledgment that a comprehensive understanding of grammar entails not only knowing how to form sentences but also comprehending the meanings of these forms and constructing patterns to effectively convey contextualized, intended messages (Roeder et al., 2020; Mart, 2019; Murtisari et al., 2020). This transition from traditional rote memorization methods to more interactive approaches fosters meaningful language use and enhances communicative competence, aligning with the insights put forth by esteemed scholars like Celce-Murcia (2015), Larsen-Freeman (2016), and Schmitt and Schmitt (2020).

To address the unique challenges encountered by adolescent English language learners in Egypt, curriculum adjustments aligned with CLT principles advocated in official textbooks like the "*Hello! Series*" for secondary education are necessary. Despite the acknowledged importance of communicative approaches, their effective implementation remains challenging in the Egyptian EFL context, particularly for adolescent learners.

Further research and the development of tailored instructional strategies are imperative to optimize language learning outcomes for this age group. By integrating insights from established SLA and CLT theories into practice, educators can create a more effective and engaging learning environment, ultimately equipping students with the linguistic and cognitive skills necessary for success in a globalized world.

## 6. Conclusion

In summary, contextual factors significantly influence language learning outcomes for adolescent students in Egyptian public schools. While early exposure to English may offer advantages, adolescents can make substantial progress with appropriate support and communicative instructional approaches. This pivotal phase of language development presents unique opportunities for tailored interventions and engaging methodologies that can greatly enhance learning outcomes.

The transformative impact of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is evident, emphasizing active learner participation. However, effective implementation for adolescents necessitates strategies attuned to their specific context and needs. This review underscores the dynamic nature of SLA for adolescent learners and underscores the importance of customized approaches addressing individual learning preferences and challenges.

By synthesizing recent evidence on the interaction between age and SLA within CLT frameworks and integrating reflective practices through autoethnography, this study enriches understanding of age-related dynamics and pedagogical strategies, offering valuable insights for optimizing language learning outcomes in Egyptian EFL contexts. Ongoing research should



concentrate on innovative CLT practices seamlessly integrated into authentic learning environments, enhancing the SLA process and practical communication skills for adolescent English learners in Egyptian public schools, thereby preparing them for success in a globalized world.

## 7. Limitations

The study has certain limitations that merit acknowledgment. Firstly, its primary focus on the relationship between age and SLA within the framework of CLT in an EFL setting may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts or age groups. While the research adopted a mixed-method approach, combining literature review and personal reflection to offer a broader understanding, this method may have inadvertently overlooked relevant studies or viewpoints, potentially affecting the comprehensiveness of the findings.

Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of SLA among adolescent English learners in Egypt. The findings highlight the importance of tailored pedagogical strategies to optimize language learning outcomes for this group. Future research should aim to address these limitations by exploring a wider range of contexts and incorporating diverse perspectives to build on the insights presented here.

## References

- Abdukadyrova, G., & Suyunova, M. I. Q. (2019). The age factor in second language acquisition and differences in reaching proficiency. *Scientific and Technical Journal of Namangan Institute of Engineering and Technology*, 1(3), 257-264. <https://doi.org/10.18178/ijiet.2019.9.3.1204>
- Adams, R. J., Smart, P., & Huff, A. S. (2016). Shades of grey: Guidelines for working with the grey literature in systematic reviews for management and organizational studies. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 19(4), 432-454. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12102>
- Ahmed, S. T. S., & Pawar, S. V. (2018). Communicative competence in English as a foreign language: Its meaning and the pedagogical considerations for its development. *The Creative Launcher*, 2(6), 267-277.
- Alwazir, B., & Shukri, N. (2016). The use of CLT in the Arab context: A critical perspective. *International Journal of English Language Education*, 5(1), 15. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v5i1.10486>
- Aoghala, S. R. (2021). Age effect on second language acquisition: A critical review and implications for education in Libya. *Al Qurtas Journal*, 12, 58-75.
- Azieb, S. (2021). The critical period hypothesis in second language acquisition: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies*, 8(4), 20-26. <https://doi.org/10.22259/2694-6296.0804001>
- Badr, H. M. E. A. (2022). *The effectiveness of task-based instruction on third-year secondary*

*students' English speaking performance* [Doctoral dissertation, The British University in Dubai]. The British University in Dubai (BUiD). <https://bspace.buid.ac.ae/handle/1234/2059>

Baumeister, R. F. (2013). Writing a literature review. In M. J. Prinstein (Ed.), *The portable mentor: Expert guide to a successful career in psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 119–132). Springer Science + Business Media. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-3994-3\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-3994-3_8)

Cadierno, T., Hansen, M., Lauridsen, J. T., Eskildsen, S. W., Fenyvesi, K., Hannibal Jensen, S., & aus der Wieschen, M. V. (2020). Does younger mean better? Age of onset, learning rate and short-term L2 proficiency in young Danish learners of English. *Vigo International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 17, 57-86. <https://doi.org/10.35869/vial.v0i17.1465>

Celce-Murcia, M. (2015). An overview of teaching grammar in ELT. In M. Christison, D. Christian, P. Duff, & N. Spada (Eds.), *Teaching and learning English grammar: Research findings and future directions* (pp. 3–18). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315719016>

Cook, V. (2016). *Second language learning and language teaching* (5th ed.). Routledge.

Cooper, C., Booth, A., Husk, K., Lovell, R., Frost, J., Schauburger, U., Britten, N., & Garside, R. (2022). A tailored approach: A model for literature searching in complex systematic reviews. *Journal of Information Science*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/01655515221114452>

Darwish, R.A. (2016). Error analysis: A case study of high basic stage students in Latin secondary school in Zarqa, Jordan. *Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics*, 21, 31-34.

Dewey, A. & Drahota, A. (2016) Introduction to systematic reviews: online learning module *Cochrane Training*. <https://training.cochrane.org/interactivelearning/module-1-introduction-conducting-systematic-reviews>

Dos Santos, L. M. (2020). The discussion of communicative language teaching approach in language classrooms. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research*, 7(2), 104-109. <https://doi.org/10.20448/journal.509.2020.72.104.109>

El-Araby, S., El-Naggar, Z. A., Gheith, A. G., El-Dib, M. A.B., Mostafa, A. A., El-Said, M.F., Salah-Al-Din, Y. A., Mostafa, A. H., Farghly, G. E., Abdullah, M. A., El Souefi, N., Hegazy, M. F., Abdul Aal, A. A., El-Mehallawy, M. H., Siam, E. A. & Bekhit, M. A. (2012). *The National Curriculum Framework for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Grades 1-12*. Egypt: Ministry of Education.

El-Fiki, H. A. (2012). *Teaching English as a foreign language and using English as a medium of instruction in Egypt: Teachers' perceptions of teaching approaches and sources of change*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto]. University of Toronto. <http://hdl.handle.net/1807/32705>

Ellis, R. (2015). The importance of focus on form in communicative language teaching. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 1(2), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.32601/ejal.460611>

- Gass, S. M., Plonsky, L., & Behney, J. (2020). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course*. Routledge.
- Hartshorne, J. K., Tenenbaum, J. B., & Pinker, S. (2018). A critical period for second language acquisition: Evidence from 2/3 million English speakers. *Cognition*, 177, 263-277. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2018.04.007>
- Hashim, H. U., Yunus, M. M., & Hashim, H. (2018). Language learning strategies used by adult learners of teaching English as a second language (TESL). *TESOL International Journal*, 13(4), 39-48.
- Hoang, V. Q. (2021). The differences of individual learners in second language acquisition. *International Journal of TESOL & Education*, 1(1), 38-46.
- Ibrahim, M.K., & Ibrahim, Y.A. (2017). Communicative English language teaching in Egypt: Classroom practice and challenges. *Issues in Educational Research*, 27, 285-313.
- Keles, U. (2022). Autoethnography as a recent methodology in applied linguistics: A methodological review. *The Qualitative Report*, 27(2), 448-474. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2022.5131>
- Kessler, M. (2023). Autoethnography for language teacher education programs: Connecting identities, ideologies, and experiences to curricular design practices. *TESOL Journal*, 00, e772. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.772>
- Khalil, A. H., El-Nagar, B. E., & Awad, M. A. E. (2019). The effect of brain-based learning on developing some speaking skills of Egyptian EFL secondary school students. *International Journal of Environmental & Science Education*, 14(3), 103-116.
- Krashen, S. D. (1979). Adult second language acquisition as post-critical period learning. *ITL - International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 43, 39-52. <https://doi.org/10.1075/itl.43.03kra>
- Lantolf, J. P. (2023). On the value of explicit instruction: The view from sociocultural theory. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, 39, 281-304. <https://doi.org/10.32038/ltrq.2024.39.18>
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2016). Classroom-oriented research from a complex systems perspective. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 6(3), 377-393. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2016.6.3.2>
- Larsen-Freeman, D., & Long, M. H. (2014). *An introduction to second language acquisition research*. Routledge.
- Latif, A., & Mahmoud, M. M. (2012). Teaching a standard-based communicative English textbook series to secondary school students in Egypt: Investigating teachers' practices and beliefs. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 11(3), 78-97.
- Lenneberg, E. H. (1967). *Biological foundations of language*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Long, M. H. (1981). Input, interaction, and second-language acquisition. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 379(1), 259-278. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749->

6632.1981.tb42014.x

Mart, Ç. T. (2019). A comparison of form-focused, content-based and mixed approaches to literature based instruction to develop learners' speaking skills. *Cogent Education*, 6(1), 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2019.1660526>

McIlwraith, H. & Fortune, A. (2016). English language teaching and learning in Egypt: An insight. London: British Council. [https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/F239\\_English%20Language%20in%20Egypt\\_FINAL%20web.pdf](https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/F239_English%20Language%20in%20Egypt_FINAL%20web.pdf)

Ministry of Education (MoE). (2014). *The strategic plan for pre-university education in Egypt (2030/2014), education the national Project for Egypt - Together, We Can Provide a Good Education for Every Child*. <http://www.unesco.org/education/edurights/media/docs/c33b72f4c03c58424c5ff258cc6aeae0eb58de4.pdf/>

Murtisari, E. T., Salvadora, L., & Hastuti, G. (2020). Isolated and integrated grammar teaching in tertiary EFL context: Indonesian teachers' beliefs. *SAGA: Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 17-30. <https://doi.org/10.21460/saga.2020.11.9>

Nejadansari, D., & Nasrollahzadeh, J. (2011). Effects of age on second language acquisition. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 3(3), 19. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/n>

Nisha, P. R. (2024). Comparing grammar translation method and communicative language teaching in EFL context: A qualitative literature review. *FOSTER: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 5(1), 40-48. <https://doi.org/10.24256/foster-jelt.v5i1.159>

Ortega, L. (2014). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Routledge.

Peña-Pincheira, R. (2023). A path towards transformational language teaching and a polydisciplinamorous pedagogy: An autoethnography. In I. C. Plough & W. Tamboura (Eds.), *Examining a cultures and languages across the curriculum program through autoethnographies*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003217190>

Qasserras, L. (2023). Systematic review of communicative language teaching (CLT) in language education: A balanced perspective. *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy*, 4(6), 17-23. <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejedu.2023.4.6.763>

Roeder, R., Araujo-Jones, D., & Miller, E. R. (2020). Grammar in communicative language teaching: Teacher beliefs about theory versus practice. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 8(4), 45-64.

Schmitt, N., & Schmitt, D. (2020). *Vocabulary in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108569057>

Shurovi, M., Yahaya, M. F., Hajimia, H., & Hasan, M. K. (2024). Five decades of achievement motivation research in ELT: A systematic literature review. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction (MJLI)*, 21(1), 285-318. <https://doi.org/10.32890/mjli2024.21.1.10>

Siddaway, A. P., Wood, A. M., & Hedges, L. V. (2019). How to do a systematic review: A best practice guide for conducting and reporting narrative reviews, meta-analyses, and meta-syntheses. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 70(1), 747-770. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-010418-102803>

Sleeter C. & Carmona J. F. (2017). *Un-standardizing curriculum : Multicultural teaching in the standards-based classroom* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.

Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass, & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 235-253). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Tayel, A. A. M. (2021). *Teacher cognition in EFL teaching: A study of non-native English-speaking teachers of English for Arabic-speaking students in Egypt with a particular focus on vocabulary*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Otago]. University of Otago <http://hdl.handle.net/10523/10778>

Uman, L. S. (2011). Systematic reviews and meta-analyses. *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 20(1), 57–59. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444311723.ch8>

Vygotsky, L. S. (2012). *Mind in society: Development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.

Wu, E. Y. (2022). A brief review of the effects of age on second language acquisition: Is younger better? *Journal of Language Teaching*, 2(1), 1-5. <https://doi.org/10.54475/jlt.2022.001>

Yang, F. (2019). The age factor on second language acquisition and its implications for pedagogy—A review and future research directions. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology*, 9(3), 227-230. <https://doi.org/10.18178/ijiet.2019.9.3.1204>

Yazan, B. (2019). An autoethnography of a language teacher educator: Wrestling with ideologies and identity positions. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 46(3), 34-56. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26746049>

Yazan, B., Pentón Herrera, L. J., & Rashed, D. (2022). Transnational TESOL practitioners' identity tensions: A collaborative Autoethnography. *TESOL Quarterly*, 57(1), 140-167. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3130>

## Acknowledgments

The author extends his gratitude to ... (removed to maintain anonymity)... for covering the publication processing charge associated with his research through the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF).

## Funding

Not Applicable.

**Competing interests**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

**Informed consent**

Obtained.

**Ethics approval**

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Macrothink Institute.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

**Provenance and peer review**

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

**Data availability statement**

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

**Data sharing statement**

No additional data are available.

**Open access**

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

**Copyrights**

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.