



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2004 PROJECT SUMMARY**

Name(s) Nicole A. Poletto	Project Number J0331
Project Title Second Language Learning: Is There an Ideal Age?	
Abstract Objectives/Goals The problem the experimenter would like to solve is whether children or adults learn a second language faster in controlled conditions. It was always thought that children are better suited to learning a second language. Recent research has shown that it is not necessarily true. Scientists also found that the brain continually changes and develops throughout your life and does not lose its plasticity as once thought. It would be interesting to find out whether or not children learn faster because much of the research has been contradictory.	
Methods/Materials Experimental Procedure 1.Create consent forms for subjects. 2.Develop 20 vocabulary words for the made up language consisting of 10 animals and 10 colors. 3.Design a multiple-choice test. 4.Write a script to teach the new language to children and adults. 5.Teach language in classrooms of children following the script exactly for each class visited. 6.Administer the test to children. 7.Teach the language to the adults using the same script used to teach the language to children. 8.Administer the test to adults. 9.Grade tests from all participants. Materials 1.Script to teach the language classes 2.Language Test 3.Consent Forms 4.Grading Scale 5.Teaching Boards 6.Pencils and Candy to give to the subjects	
Results There were a total of 120 subjects tested, 41 adults and 79 children. The data seemed to be clear-cut as to who learned a second language faster. The adults scored the highest overall and the children's scores ranged from 0 all the way to 14.	
Conclusions/Discussion The adults clearly scored better on the test.	
Summary Statement The problem the experimenter would like to solve is whether children or adults learn a second language faster in controlled conditions.	
Help Received My mother helped me by taking me to all my testing dates and helping me while I taught the kids. My whole family contributed to the development of the new language vocabulary and was very supportive and encouraging.	