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Strefa Współpracy, Dobra 55

The cognitive neuroscience of adult language learning: The potential and the challenges for individuals

Current trends in neurocognitive research demonstrate the potential of adults to learn additional languages successfully and to engage neurocognitive processes that are similar to those recruited for native-language processing. However, not all adult learners are successful and a great deal of variability among learners remains unexplained. In this talk, I provide an overview of research that has examined neurocognitive processing for adult-learned additional languages with a focus on (morpho)syntax. I present results from studies that examine language processing using event-related potentials (ERPs), which reflect brain-based electrical activity associated with processing particular linguistic structures. I consider factors that appear to partially account for variability in ERPs, including learning context (e.g., classroom, study abroad) and cognitive individual differences (e.g., working memory, procedural memory). Although each of these variables uniquely contributes to the neurocognitive processing of adult-learned additional languages, a comprehensive understanding of variability continues to be an important question for our field to resolve, and thus, I conclude with suggestions for research directions for emerging scholars.