

The most effective way to learn a new language is to interact with native speakers of that language in a natural setting. Children master new languages very fast. A good example is where an employee is transferred with his family from his native Central Province to Nyanza Province. It is not a surprise to hear his younger children speak fluent Luo with a local accent in a matter of weeks while the adults in the family will leave Kisumu after 5 years having mastered only a couple of Luo words.

As they play games and socialize with their new friends in the estate the children first observe, listen then try to repeat the words and phrases associated with that particular activity and within no time they will be speaking the local language fluently. This is called learning by immersion. The reason why this comes so naturally is that children unlike adults have no inhibitions about making language mistakes.

Many Anglophone adults will only attempt to speak a new language after they are sure that their pronunciation and grammar is perfect (like their English colonisers who insisted on perfection). This is the wrong approach and language learning gurus advise otherwise. Just speak what you know they advise. This is the reason why people from French speaking and other countries master languages so quickly. They are not worried about what others think as long as they are able to communicate their needs. In no time they are fluent in the new language.