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Cognitive Processing Skills in Reading Comprehension in the Achievement of Civil Services: A Case Study of Civil Service Aspirants

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Abstract

The concept of second language learning is multidisciplinary and depends on cognitive processes. The goal of the research is to identify second language acquisition issues, particularly for students from rural backgrounds, and to identify or create a solution by seeing the issue from a psychological standpoint, which will be highly beneficial to the students who are dealing with the issue. The psychological viewpoint is limited to the relationship between the cognitive process and second language acquisition. This research, conducted at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, examined adult learners of English as a second language and the role of cognitive elements in second language acquisition. This study focuses specifically on cognitive characteristics, such as intelligence, language aptitude, and language learning procedures that require human perception and cognition during the learning process, among all the elements that influence second language acquisition. It is conducted with randomly chosen university students, and the cognitive approach to linguistics appears to be a relatively new field that needs more research. The findings indicate that the majority of these students are unable to properly understand the English language because they do not recognize the importance of mental ability in their academic work. This study, which has a strong basis comprised of earlier research, is built around the framework of several ideas regarding various factors in second language learning and cognitive perspectives. This study attempts to provide a higher basis for the analytical work or to go deeper into specific elements, building on a solid foundation of prior research.

Data is gathered using both qualitative and quantitative methods since it is anticipated that the research will perfectly blend both techniques in order to produce a thorough understanding of the research issue. Specifically, surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and observations were used to do this. The statistical and thematic approaches for data analysis are then supported by pertinent theoretical viewpoints. The ultimate goal is to improve the teaching abilities of the faculty members by implementing more potent pedagogical



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techniques, in addition to assisting students in overcoming the challenges associated with acquiring a second language.

Keywords: Cognitive processing skills, Reading comprehension, learning, civil services, aperiens, A case study.

1.Introduction

According to some educators, the number of multilingual people worldwide has surpassed that of monolingual people, suggesting that multilingualism is an inexorable trend brought about by globalization and cross-cultural interaction. This explains why there has been a recent push among younger generations to pick up as many languages as possible. While studying one's mother tongue is usually a success, learning a second language (L2) appears to be following a different pattern, as acquiring a second language through classroom teaching is almost always going to result in significant time taking in many countries but when they followed approaches and techniques, it will be easy to learn the language.

This has prompted numerous academics and specialists in the field of education to engage in rigorous research in an attempt to determine the mechanism behind the acquisition of a second language. Several theories and conjectures have been put out in an attempt to uncover the mysteries of effective language learning. Because of its wide and intricate scope, it has been a fascinating topic of discussion from the beginning of linguistic studies, but it still presents a significant obstacle to anybody seeking complete comprehension. The theories of second language acquisition (SLA) have revealed that different learners experience the acquisition process differently for a variety of reasons.

The focus of these variables' research is on whether the fundamental language abilities— speaking, listening, reading, and writing—are developed by nurture, nature, or a combination of the two. These significant variables are typically categorized into four groups: individual variance, sociocultural factors, language factors, and cognitive aspects. Based on more. In general cognitive research, cognitive methods consider the brain processes that account for language learners' acquisition. Cognitive aspects include learning processes, aptitude for language, and intelligence. Language is seen as a distinct and one-of-a-kind form of information, and linguistic approaches to second language acquisition study base their analysis of language acquisition on the findings of linguistic studies. Within this group of universal grammar, there are two important study strands: typological methods and group



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universal grammar. Sociocultural views, which highlight the significance of social environment in understanding language learning, can also be applied to second language acquisition. Therefore, it rejects the notion that language is exclusively a psychological construct (Gass & Selinker, 2008, pp. 280–281). Ellis (2008, p. 281) identifies three categories of social structure: situational circumstances, particular social factors, and sociolinguistic context, all of which have an impact on second language acquisition. Finally, individuals themselves are thought to be the sources of any potential modifications and advancements in their own language acquisition process.

It is thought that the disparities in learners' success can be attributed to their variances in age, learning style, and affective factors. The critical period hypothesis, which contends that there is a specific infancy age range after which one's capacity to correctly and fully acquire a language is lost, is one theory used to investigate the effects of age on language learning. In the meantime, there are two main categories of strategies: communication strategies and learning strategies. Regarding the final group, affective components are commonly characterized as emotional elements that play a role in the learning process. These elements include motivation, personality, social attitude, anxiety, and personality.

This study will pay special attention to the cognitive elements—which involve human perception and cognition during the learning period—among all the previously mentioned components that influence the acquisition process of second language learners. Despite decades of frequent discussion, this field of study remains mostly unexplored because academics cannot agree on a number of key aspects. The ideas and frameworks employed in this field come from the more general cognitive theories of learning, which see the problems associated with learning a second language as a particular application of the brain's learning processes. Actually, this is what sets it apart from other methods of teaching second languages.

Cognitive aspects are said to be the most important of all the components listed because learning a second language is closely related to the subconscious mind and greatly dependent on how minds function. However, a lot of language learners are unaware of how to best utilize their cognitive abilities, and some even disregard this when studying their target language, wasting many hours.

Without showing any signs of progress.



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For years, the English Language Faculty of the University has been plagued by similar circumstances, with numerous students making fruitless attempts to enhance their English language skills. This research is heavily motivated by the assumption that the majority of students in this classroom are unable to properly understand the English language because they do not recognize the roles that cognitive processes play in second language acquisition. The researcher's opinion is that this faculty's students have placed a strong emphasis on learning vocabulary and grammatical structures for writing and reading, as well as practicing speaking and listening through group discussions and audio.

However, very few people actually pay attention to how their cognitive functions operate during this process to see the potential impact on maximizing their linguistic ability. As a result, no serious steps are being taken to train intellectual capacity for language learning purposes. As a result, for many of them, the outcomes have not shown enough encouraging indicators. Additionally, despite the fact that it might improve teacher performance, this field of study appears to be relatively new to this university's research history, and nearly all of the students here believe that the terms "language acquisition" and "cognitive factors" are foreign. This fact gives even more justification for the study's conduct. I hope that my research will satisfy the needs and interests of people looking for efficient ways to improve their English language skills, as well as those who want to see their English teaching career become more productive.

Statement of the Research Problem

Methods for learning languages that require the use of human perception and cognition while the material is being learned. It is conducted among a chosen group of Jawaharlal Nehru University students, where the cognitive approach to linguistics appears to be a relatively new area that needs more research. The findings indicate that the majority of the students struggle to understand English as a second language because they don't recognize how important mental ability is to their academic performance. This study, which has a strong foundation consisting of earlier research and is built upon the framework of several theories about various aspects of second language acquisition and cognitive perspectives, intends to go further into specific facets or establish a higher basis for the analytical. Data is gathered using both qualitative and



Quantitative methods since it is anticipated that the research will perfectly blend both techniques in order to produce a thorough understanding of the research issue. Specifically, surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and observations were used to do this. The statistical and thematic approaches for data analysis are then supported by pertinent theoretical viewpoints.

2.Review of Literature

International, national, and state-level studies:

The research has been viewing the process of acquisition from a cognitive perspective. This approach aims at analyzing the mental processes that language acquisition involves and the nature of language knowledge stored in the mind. According to cognitive research, L2 acquisition is more like an exceptional circumstance of general learning mechanisms in the human brain, owing to the fact that it applies the same concepts and models as in learning theories in terms of cognition. The prevailing position among all approaches in this particular research field belongs to the computational model, acknowledged by Rod Ellis (2008, pp. 405-406). There are three stages involved in this model. The first stage is where learners store their retained language input, known as intake, in short-term memory. Some of the intake is then converted to form second-language knowledge in the next stage, which ends up with information saved in long-term memory. Finally, this amount of knowledge is utilized to produce speech - the learning output. To cast light on the importance and effects of cognitive factors on SLA, this paper shall divide these factors into three groups: intelligence, linguistic aptitude, and learning strategies. Intelligence The first category is understood as a mental ability that governs logical thinking and reasoning. Just as significant as determination, diligence, and hard work, the vital role of intelligence in learning a new language is proven by the commonly seen fact that children with high intellectual levels are more likely to come up with clever use of structures and vocabularies, as well as possess sharp argumentative skills. This is the major reason why many students with excellence in maths or physics, which basically require logical ability and data analysis, tend to perform equally well in linguistic subjects. The importance of intelligence in SLA has, in fact, been acknowledged by Rubin (1981, pp.117-131) who believes verbal intelligence is among the most crucial cognitive factors, alongside phonological processing ability and long-term memory capacity. Undoubtedly, success in life and learning should have some correlations to high IQ Test Scores, which means high IQ is associated with better results in language tests. However, it has been identified by Spolsky (1989, p. 103) that this is only true as far as academic skills



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are concerned, meaning “the ability to perform well in standard intelligence tests correlates highly with school-related second language learning, but is unrelated to the learning of a second language for informal and social functions.”

Similarly, Howard Gardner (1993, pp.169-172) proposed a theory that there are multiple intelligences, yet only one or two of them are most instrumental in learning languages. There are eight types of intelligence described in his theory of Multiple Intelligences: linguistic (sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to use the language for achieving specific targets); logical-mathematical (the capacity of deductive reasoning, logical thinking, and pattern detecting); spatial (ability to perceive wide space and more confined areas, and make use of their patterns); musical (ability to control musical pitches and rhythmic patterns by recognizing and creating them); bodily-kinesthetic (capability of utilizing mental abilities to support body movement coordination); interpersonal (capacity to recognize and comprehend others' intentions, motivations, and aspirations); intrapersonal (capacity to develop a sense of self-identity and have full understanding of oneself); and naturalistic (capability to absorb knowledge about the natural world).

Linguistic aptitude is considered a talent or an inherent capacity to excel in languages. It is not an achievement itself but is the potential for achievement. Therefore, L2 learners, especially beginners, often hear about aptitude tests that have been designed for the purpose of predicting individuals' future performance. From my own perspective, though it does not play the role of a determiner for language comprehension, those who lack linguistic aptitude surely find far more struggle to reach the same competence as their aptitude equipped counterparts and within a longer time. There are several experiments and studies supporting this point of view. Harley and Hart (1989, p.379) stated that language aptitude is "one of the central individual differences in language learning" and also "the most consistent predictor of one's

\Success in learning a foreign language". They conducted a study on the correlations between language aptitude and L2 proficiency in 1997, in which intact classes were utilized to see how aptitude could affect the learning process of classroom learners. Their subjects were classroom learners whose intensive exposure to second languages started at different ages. Their findings revealed some differences between adolescent and younger participants, with the former having their L2 competency positively linked to the analytical dimension of



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language aptitude and the latter showing the same connections between their L2 outcomes and memory ability. These results act as strong evidence for the above argument on the positive effects that linguistic aptitude has on every language learner. Another study in favor of linguistic aptitude's crucial position in SLA is the one conducted by Skehan (1986). This researcher focused his work on the fundamental complexity of language aptitude and the way it is linked to the acquisition of a first and second language. He finally found out that the ability to handle languages without clearly set contexts is actually included in human aptitude and that it is associated with both learning academic skills and intelligence (Ellis, 1994). With these results, the researcher personally believes what this research has found out is not only that language aptitude contains essential elements that contribute to the full development of a language in human minds but also the implications that it has strong bonds with other determiners of SLA, proving its role as a predictor of L2 achievement. This is also the conclusion Cummins reached after the studies in 1983, in which he investigated academic language performance in the context of formal classroom instruction. He finally came up with the idea that aptitude acts as a predictor that foretells L2 proficiency and that there should be some improvements in aptitude tests so that they would measure both cognitive competence and communicative capabilities.

Brown (1994) relies on brain functions to find the variations in people's preferred ways of learning. What he did was examine a table written by Torrance (1980), which demonstrated the distinctions between humans' left and right brains in terms of functional characteristics. He realized that those in possession of intellectual strengths, keen on certain amounts of established information, and depending on language to generate thoughts or memorize things are dominated by the left brain. Meanwhile, right-brain dominated ones are recognized with intuition, a holistic way of processing information, and dependence on drawing and demonstration to learn better. Two other researchers have contribute another way of sorting out learning strategies are Chamot and O'Malley (1987). They argue that there are three principal types: met cognitive, cognitive, and social/affective strategies (Ellis, 1994, pp. 537-538). Metacognitive strategies are defined as the strategies used for analysis, monitoring, evaluation, planning, and organization during the learning period. As regards cognitive strategies, learners especially find them useful when they get involved in activities like repeating, translating, and note-taking for the purpose of getting the learning resources transformed. When learners make an effort to develop the quality and the amount of their L2



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communication, such as when talking to native speakers for the first time or using L2 to give inquiries, they change their styles to social strategies. However, if learners attempt to take over their emotions and feelings, such as anxiety, embarrassment, or irritation, the strategies they shall be using belong to the affective group.

Review of studies on Second Language Acquisition, International Studies Gaillard, Tremblay. 2021. "Linguistic Proficiency Assessment in Second Language Acquisition Research: The Elicited Imitation TASK." This study investigated the elicited imitation task (EIT) as a tool for measuring linguistic proficiency in a second/foreign (L2) language, focusing on French Denhovska, Serratrice, and Payne. (2019). "Acquisition of Second Language Grammar Under Incidental Learning Conditions: The Role of Frequency and Working Memory." The author reports that although frequency is recognized as an important factor in second language (L2) acquisition, it has remained relatively investigated in terms of its impact on the acquisition of grammatical knowledge under incidental learning conditions

Isurin, Seidel. (2018). "Traces of Memory for a Lost Childhood Language: The Savings Paradigm Expanded." The paper has a study related to the adoption of techniques to examine remnants of a lost childhood language, an adoptee who did not know her linguistic background prior to her adoption at the age of 3 years.

Hamrick. (2017). "A Role for Chunk Formation in Statistical Learning of Second Language Syntax." The present study compared adult learning of syntax and the ability of two models of statistical learning to simulate human performance. Service, Yli-Kaitala, Maury, Kim. (2016). "Adults' and 8- 8-Year-Olds' Learning in a Foreign Word Repetition Task: Similar and different". The researcher has shown the significance of age in second language acquisition, which is one of the most hot-debated issues in the field; very few studies have directly addressed age differences in the language learning process. The study investigated learning in a foreign-word repetition task.

3. Research Gap

The first is the cognitive process's role in learning a second language, which hasn't been examined in earlier research.

The second, which has also not been examined, is how learning a second language affects the cognitive process.



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The final one is that the synchronism between the cognitive process and the learning of a second language was not examined; research on second languages was conducted, but it was not especially focused on the aforementioned topics.

4. Significance of the Study

This study considers intelligence, language aptitude, and language learning strategies as the primary cognitive characteristics that have a substantial impact on the ultimate (second language) L2 proficiency. The English Language department at JNT University was selected as the study location because it is thought that a significant portion of the student body there is in desperate need of academic assistance and because the cognitive approach to linguistics has never been thoroughly investigated there. As a result, the study's main objectives cover a wide range of topics, including the contribution of intellectual, altitudinal, and strategic factors to students' English language learning, the connections between cognitive effects and learning challenges, and the immediate steps that should be taken to improve language proficiency for all.

5. Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study is centered on a few key studies, such as the actual understanding of second language acquisition for engineering graduates. The research is restricted to the examination of student data from a certain demographic. At this point, it is considered that students are serious about their careers, life goals, and education, which requires learning a second language to help them achieve their objectives more smoothly. Two sets of schools have been chosen for the investigation. The cognitive studies are not up to date with respect to pedagogy, faculty, curriculum, and learning environments. The rationale behind selecting students to gather factual data for the research study is that the researcher is also employed by the institution, where students are required to speak English.

6. Objectives of the Study

The study's goal is to identify second language acquisition issues, particularly for pupils from rural backgrounds.

Additionally, finding or creating a solution by viewing the issue from a psychological angle will greatly benefit the pupils who are dealing with the issue.

The psychological viewpoint is limited to the reliance of second language acquisition on the cognitive process.



This study generally intends to shed light on the role that various aspects of cognitive variables have in increasing the quality of education that JN University's English language students get by providing an insightful investigation into the subject of SLA with a focus on these factors' many characteristics.

The goals are to ascertain whether instructors and students are ignoring cognitive approaches and whether this is negatively affecting students' academic performance. Additionally, there may be a connection between the majority of these students' common language-learning difficulties and their lack of comprehension of cognitive capacities. The next goal is to develop targeted ways for improving English acquisition that takes into account each person's unique learning preferences as well as their innate language skills and intelligence.

This is aimed for language learners who require effective learning strategies as well as language teachers who want to significantly enhance the quality of their instruction. This is aimed for language learners who require effective learning strategies as well as language teachers who want to significantly enhance the quality of their instruction.

7.Hypothesis

The psychological viewpoint, known as the cognitive approach, is limited to the relationship between the cognitive process and the acquisition of a second language. The learning of a second language may be successful with this method.

8.Research Questions

1. What role do cognitive factors play in second language acquisition?
- 2 How can this role be linked to the general role of cognitive factors in second language acquisition?
- 3.What are the common problems related to cognitive factors that they encounter during these learning stages?
- 4.How have cognitive factors influenced the outcomes of English studies produced by these students?
- 5.What can these students do to improve their English performance based on the understanding of cognitive factors?
- 6.How can the focus on cognitive factors allow lecturers of this faculty to enhance their teaching efficiency?



9.Approaches to the Study

The concept of second language learning is multidisciplinary and depends on cognitive processes. Based on more general cognitive research, cognitive methods consider the brain processes that account for language learners' acquisition. Cognitive aspects include learning processes, aptitude for language, and intelligence. Language is seen as a distinct and one-of-a-kind form of information, and linguistic approaches to second language acquisition study base their analysis of language acquisition on the findings of linguistic studies.

This group includes two important study strands: typological approaches and universal grammar. Sociocultural views, which highlight the significance of social environment in understanding language learning, can also be applied to second language acquisition.

10.Methodology

People's learning styles have clear correlations with their cognitive processes. It seems that students who develop more successful and individually tailored learning strategies achieve more quickly and with greater motivation. A person's personal learning style, their ideas about the best ways to learn a language, and their goals as learners all influence the tactics they choose. The relationship between learners' cognition and the tactics they choose has been demonstrated, as these aspects are part of their mental knowledge of both the target language and themselves. The premise made by Gardner and McIntyre (1993), according to which situational factors, personal traits, and the type of learning approach employed are the markers of success in second language acquisition, lends credence to this point of view.

11.Source or Types of Data

For understanding the awareness, questions relating to the institutions, primary and secondary sources will be used. Qualitative and quantitative data will be used in the research.

12.Methods of Data Collection

The strategies individuals apply for their learning bear noticeable associations with their cognition. Apparently, learners who come up with more effective and personally appropriate strategies end up with higher levels of motivation and faster achievements. Their preferred learning styles, how they believe a language should be acquired, and the types of learners they want to be are among many factors that determine one's choice of strategies. As these factors belong to the mental awareness of themselves and of the target language, the mentioned relation between chosen strategies and learners' cognition is proven. This



viewpoint is also supported by the assumption of Gardner and McIntyre (1993), who assert that situational variables, individual characteristics, and learning strategy used are the indicators of success in L2 learning. They argue that these three aspects interplay in a complex way and all produce certain changes to the proficiency of languages. To give more information about learning strategy, some researchers also refer to it as cognitive style. It is the specific and certain method of doing something with effort. Needless to say, each L2 learner has their own technique to deal with language problems, but whether that technique corresponds with their cognitive styles, which would certainly allow them to reach their best achievements, is another question. In fact, different scholars have suggested different ways of categorization for learning styles. Reid (1987) categorizes everyone's general learning styles according to several modalities, including audio (hearing), kinesthetic (touching), visual (seeing), and tactile (Touching). The first type is used to describe those who require verbal explanations or thorough instructions for grammatical rules, tackle problems by using dialogues or discussions, as well as create rhythms and sounds to learn things by heart. The second refers to the ones that are capable of memorizing well by writing down words, phrases, and sentences, with preference for activities or movement.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods are used to gather data as the research is expected to be a perfect combination of collection methods, with an aim to generate a comprehensive view of the research topic. This was specifically accomplished by conducting surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and observations. After that, relevant theoretical perspectives are utilized to assist the statistical and thematic techniques for data analysis. The ultimate purpose is not only to help students of the English Language Faculty overcome their difficulties in learning a second language but also to maximize the teaching quality of the teaching staff in this faculty with more effective pedagogic strategies.

13.Universe of the Study

The research aims to locate problems of acquiring a second language, especially for students from rural backgrounds, and to locate or design a solution by perceiving the problem through a psychological perspective so that it will be of great help to students who are facing the problem. The psychological perspective is confined to the second language acquisition and its interdependence on the cognitive process. The research is carried forward on three facets:



The first one is the role of the cognitive process in acquiring a second language. The second one is the influence of second language acquisition on cognitive processes. The last one is the synchronism of second language acquisition and cognitive process.

14.Data Analysis

Overall, every single question has been answered in great detail. With demonstrations and figures found in terms of current challenges in English language acquisition, the external and internal reasons behind all language problems, possible solutions that one has tried for their own improvement, the effects of the chosen methods, as well as the stages English learners of Jawaharlal Nehru University students go through during their entire English learning process, cognitive factors, namely intelligence, language aptitude, and language learning strategies, have proven to be of indispensable significance in the development of languages in the human mind. The role they play holds a decisive position, especially with regards to an educational environment where students possessing great intellectual and cognitive capability are short of elementary knowledge of what cognition means in SLA or the power it holds to their linguistic process, thus unable to take action for promoting their mental abilities with an aim to achieve remarkable changes in their studies. Results from interviews, observations, the survey, and the questionnaire have shown a variety of worth-noting points as follows: o Students and teachers pay little attention to the types of intelligence students may have, namely linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligence. Thus, some students reported having no intelligence or not believing in its power to help them achieve their goals of proficiency. Many students have chosen learning strategies that are not in accordance with their cognitive styles, leading to failure to improve. Students are mostly audio and visual learners, with a smaller percentage being kinesthetic or tactile ones. Though many reported having language aptitude, they are not making an attempt to take advantage of their natural ability to push their proficiency to higher levels. Instead, they refuse to believe in the positive influence of their innate skills and depend totally on other factors. Students in this educational setting do experience the stages proposed by Stephen Krashen in their acquisition process, but not every stage. In fact, some students skip one or several stages but are still able to succeed in their learning.

15.Conclusion

second language acquisition formed with the foundation of Harley and Hart's research into the impacts of language aptitudes on second language learners within the setting of



classrooms, this study has come to a certain conclusion according to which the grounded theory was not only adapted but also had its gaps addressed in specific cases. The research has found that most young students are not familiar with linguistic analysis simply because they are given little approach and exposure to critical issues that stimulate and encourage their analytical minds to work. By contrast, older ones seem to have had a lot more chances of encountering these issues through written essays, internship reports, specialized studies, scientific projects, and so on, hence their stronger ability to analyze. The fact that freshmen who have previously been given the conditions to develop their critical minds do perform well in analysis has confirmed this belief. As a result, students' memory or analysis outcomes have little to do with age, as opposed to what Harley and Hart found. This specific affirmation, however, is to be true for only students in the university, and no guarantee is claimed for outside of this area.

The study also succeeded in identifying the four types of learners that all participants could be classified into audio, kinesthetic, visual, and tactile learners. This is an adaptation of Reid's theory, which has served as a perfect ground for this study to dig deeper into the patterns and trends within the particular area of Jawaharlal Nehru University students. In conclusion, visual learners and audio learners are the most commonly seen among all types of English Language Faculty, for their favorites and effective methods of learning would be either audile, like songs, voices, rhymes, or discussions; visual, like videos, charts, graphs; or both like videos, it is a pilot study.

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