

A Study of Non-Cognitive Factors Influencing Second Language Acquisition of Elementary School Students of Delhi

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Abstract - This research aimed to explore the non-cognitive factors influencing second language acquisition (SLA), with a particular focus on intrinsic motivation, anxiety, social interaction, and environmental influences. Through the analysis of survey data, the study highlights the profound impact these non-cognitive variables have on students' ability to acquire a second language effectively.

It also helps the teachers to improve the performance of learners by using non-cognitive strategies in their teaching learning process. Teachers will implement these non-cognitive strategies and improve the performance of learners by language acquisition.

Keywords- Non-cognition , Second language ,Elementary

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the key findings of the research, interpret them in relation to the research objectives, and provide insights on their implications for second language acquisition. The study focused on analyzing the role of non-cognitive factors, including motivation, anxiety, interaction, and environmental influences, in the process of acquiring a second language. This chapter will integrate the results presented in the previous chapter with relevant theoretical frameworks and prior research, offering a deeper understanding of how these factors impact language learning. Furthermore, this section outlines the practical applications of the research findings, highlights the study's limitations, and provides recommendations for future research. Finally, the chapter concludes by summarizing the overall contribution of the research to the field of second language acquisition.

In the following sections, the findings will be interpreted to answer the primary research questions, demonstrating the significance of non-cognitive factors in the acquisition of a second language. Additionally, the implications for educators, students, and policymakers will be discussed, with practical suggestions for enhancing language learning environments based on the outcomes of the study.

THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY MAY BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS

Data collection through Interview method of students

The semi-structured interview data reveals insightful information about the learners' experiences, motivations, and perceptions regarding second language acquisition (SLA), focusing on non-cognitive factors. This analysis highlights several key themes:

1. Experiences in the language classroom

Many students found the experience "interesting" and appreciated the opportunity to learn new things. For them, the classroom is a space of discovery where they can explore language beyond mere textbook knowledge and some students expressed frustration due to language barriers, particularly struggling with understanding English.

2. Willingness to Communicate

Most students expressed a strong willingness to communicate in English, suggesting that social motivation plays a critical role in language learning and a significant number of students mentioned that their family and friends motivate and provide an encouraging environment for them to communicate in English. This highlights the social and environmental influences on SLA, indicating that a

supportive network is crucial for language learners to feel confident and motivated.

3. Sources of Language Acquisition

Several students indicated that being in an English-speaking environment is critical. For instance, one student explicitly mentioned the need for a setting where "everyone speaks English" ("मुझे ऐसा वातावरण चाइये जहाँ सब इंग्लिश बोलते हो"). This reflects the significant role that immersive language environments play in facilitating natural language learning and Students also recognized newspapers and other media as useful tools for language learning, which suggests the importance of exposure to a variety of language input beyond just the classroom.

4. Interaction with Peers in English

Students provided mixed responses some students responded affirmatively, stating that they do engage in conversations in English with friends and other people. This highlights the role of peer interaction in facilitating language practice, which is a crucial aspect of second language acquisition (SLA). Interaction allows students to use the language in real-life settings, helping them gain fluency and confidence.

5. Curiosity and the Desire to Learn

Many students expressed that they are curious about learning new things, especially when it comes to speaking English. This highlights that curiosity serves as an intrinsic motivator for second language acquisition (SLA). Students' desire to speak English reflects their awareness of the language's value and their interest in improving their communication skills.

6. Feeling Anxious While Speaking English

Anxiety is a key non-cognitive factor that affects students' second language acquisition. Social pressures, fear of judgment, and lack of supportive environments can increase anxiety, leading to less practice and slower language development. However, students who feel supported by family and friends are less likely to experience anxiety and are more willing to practice speaking English. This highlights the importance of creating supportive environments in both schools and homes to reduce anxiety and encourage language learning.

7. Use of New Words in Communication

Students mentioned that they use new English words with friends, which they learn from school, television, tuition teachers, and English newspapers. This shows that students are eager to incorporate new vocabulary into their conversations, indicating a positive attitude towards language learning and an understanding of the importance of expanding their lexicon for better communication and various sources such as school, media, and personal tutors were cited as places where students learn new words.

8. Environment

The environment in the classroom and in real-life contexts is a key non-cognitive factor in second language acquisition. The responses from students indicate that they benefit from a classroom environment where teachers provide a variety of engaging activities to facilitate language learning.

9. Application of Classroom Learning

Many students responded that they actively apply the language skills they have learned in the classroom in their day-to-day interactions. For example, some students mentioned practicing English with their friends, while others applied their classroom learning within their family settings. This suggests that a significant portion of students recognize the value of the English classroom as a foundation for practical language use, demonstrating that a supportive and structured classroom environment positively impacts SLA.

10. Classroom Activities for Language Acquisition

Students shared that their English teachers incorporate a wide range of activities to make language learning engaging and interactive. These activities are storytelling and poem recitation, writing on the board to focus on sentence construction and language accuracy, reading and watching English films to improve comprehension and expose students to authentic language use and writing assignments, group discussions, and essay writing to foster deeper engagement with the language, improving both written and oral communication.

DATA COLLECTION THROUGH INTERVIEW METHOD OF TEACHERS

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers to explore how non-cognitive factors influence second language acquisition (SLA). The following are the key insights gathered from the teachers' responses:

1. Non-Cognitive Factors Influencing SLA

Teachers were asked, "What non-cognitive factors influence learners' acquisition of a second language?" The common factors mentioned were: Anxiety, Environment, Social skills, Self-motivation, Curiosity, School activities .

2. Significance of Non-Cognitive Factors

When asked how non-cognitive factors contribute to SLA, teachers identified self-motivation, peer group influence, family support, and school activities (such as group work and discussions) as significant contributors. They emphasized that students' emotional and social experiences help shape their language learning journey.

3. Motivating Students to Learn a Second Language

To motivate students, teachers use a variety of approaches, including: Delivering motivational speeches, Sharing stories of role models or successful individuals, Showing motivational videos, Organizing interactive activities like role plays and storytelling sessions some teachers also noted that many students are inherently self-motivated and curious to learn, which aids in their language acquisition.

4. Impact of Curiosity on SLA

Teachers were asked if curious students acquire a second language faster than others. The consensus was that curious students do indeed learn faster, as they actively seek answers, engage in self-learning, and try to communicate in English more frequently. Their curiosity drives them to use multiple learning resources, such as television and the internet.

5. Role of Non-Cognitive Factors in SLA

Teachers overwhelmingly agreed that non-cognitive factors, such as the learning environment, motivation, peer groups, and self-motivation, play a critical role in second language acquisition. They emphasized that these elements create a supportive atmosphere that encourages learning beyond the traditional classroom setting.

6. Role of Environment in SLA

A family that speaks English can naturally foster the language in children, Teachers and peer groups can influence a learner's willingness to engage in English and creating a positive, English-speaking environment significantly aids in language learning.

7. Group Activities and SLA

Teachers agreed that group activities, such as group discussions, thought exchanges, role plays, and sentence-completion exercises, help motivate students and facilitate second language acquisition. These activities promote interaction and encourage the practical use of the language.

8. Anxiety in Speaking a Second Language

Teachers noted that many students feel anxious when speaking a second language, largely due to peer pressure and self-consciousness. This anxiety often prevents students from trying to speak English, even though they may want to.

9. Gender Differences in SLA

Most teachers believed that girls learn a second language faster than boys, Some argued that boys are better at language acquisition, A few were uncertain, stating that it depends on the individual's environment and curiosity.

10. Providing a Better Environment for SLA

Teachers were asked how they would create a better environment for SLA. Their suggestions included:

- Motivating students to speak English in class
- Providing daily opportunities for language use
- Organizing school activities like role plays, storytelling, and speeches
- Cultivating an environment that encourages English communication both inside and outside the classroom

DATA COLLECTION THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE METHOD

The research has yielded several key findings that contribute to the understanding of non-cognitive factors in second language acquisition (SLA). These findings, based on data collected from students, highlight the importance of motivation, anxiety, interaction, and environmental influences on language learning. The major findings are as follows:

1. A significant majority 95% of students indicated that both genders can acquire a second language equally well in a supportive environment.
2. A significant majority 97% of students think that Understanding others' feelings is important for me to acquire a second language.
3. A significant majority 98% of students affirmed that interaction in the target language is necessary for effective second language acquisition.
4. A significant number of students 92% believe that being social helps in the easier acquisition of a second language. This finding emphasizes the role of social interactions and communication in improving language proficiency.
5. A significant majority 94% of students believe that Developing interaction between students, teachers, and peers helps in second language acquisition."
6. A significant majority 95% of students agreed that I prefer learning in a second language in class because it allows me to explore new concepts and ideas.
7. A significant majority 92% of students agreed with this internal motivation is required to acquire the second language
8. A significant majority 84% of students believe that positive attitude towards learning is important for second language acquisition.
9. A significant majority 86% of Students believe that curiosity is important for second language acquisition.
10. A significant majority 90% of students believe that Developing communication and

cooperation among students helps in second language acquisition.

11. A significant majority 80% of students believe that curious children are intrinsically motivated to acquire a second language.
12. A significant majority 83% of students agreed that recognizing the function of words in sentences is crucial for effective language learning. This reflects the importance of linguistic knowledge in mastering a second language
13. A significant majority 85% of students recognized that environment as a critical factor in language development of students, with supportive environments facilitating language acquisition. This suggests that a positive, resource-rich environment is essential for enhancing language learning.
14. A vast majority 91% of students believe that in a family environment children naturally acquire second language.
15. A significant majority 55% of students believe that students need Opportunities for interaction is crucial for language acquisition
16. A vast majority 91% of students reported that daily opportunities to speak and interact using the second language are essential for language acquisition. This finding underscores the need for regular practice and immersion in the target language.
17. A significant majority 61% of students reported feeling anxious when speaking a second language, highlighting the need to address language-related anxiety as a barrier to language acquisition.
18. A significant majority 60% of students agreed with this i use the second language when required.
19. A significant majority 55% of students feel anxious speaking in second language in front of family and friends.
20. The majority 71% of students agreed that the data underscores the prevalence of panic among students when faced with language comprehension difficulties and suggests that seeking help from teachers .

Conclusion of the Discussion

The findings of this research provide a comprehensive understanding of how non-cognitive factors such as motivation, anxiety, social interaction, and environmental support influence second language acquisition. The results align with established theories and emphasize the importance of creating supportive, interactive, and motivating environments that address both the emotional and cognitive needs of learners. These insights can help inform teaching strategies and policies to improve language learning outcomes.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this research on non-cognitive factors influencing second language acquisition (SLA) have

significant educational implications. Understanding these factors can inform teachers, administrators, and policymakers about creating more effective learning environments and strategies for second language development. The following educational implications are drawn from the study:

1. Incorporating Social Interaction in the Classroom

The research highlights the importance of social skills and interaction in SLA. Teachers should create opportunities for students to interact in the target language within the classroom setting. Group activities such as debates, discussions, role plays, and collaborative projects can foster an environment that encourages students to practice English with their peers, enhancing both fluency and confidence.

2. Reducing Anxiety through Supportive Classroom Practices

A significant number of students reported feeling anxious when speaking English due to fear of judgment or peer pressure. Addressing this anxiety is crucial for improving language learning outcomes. Teachers should create a supportive, non-judgmental environment where students feel safe to make mistakes and learn from them.

3. Encouraging Curiosity-Driven Learning

Students who exhibited curiosity about learning English showed faster progress in acquiring the language. This finding suggests that fostering curiosity can be an effective tool for SLA. Educators should tap into students' natural curiosity by introducing engaging and culturally relevant content that captures their interest.

4. Promoting a Supportive Environment

Both students and teachers identified the role of a supportive environment, including family, peers, and school culture, as critical for SLA. Schools should actively engage families in the language learning process and encourage an English-friendly environment at home.

5. Gender-Neutral Approaches in Language Learning

The research found no significant gender difference in language acquisition students indicating that both boys and girls can acquire language equally well in a supportive environment so; Teachers should ensure that both boys and girls receive equal encouragement, participation opportunities, resources and Avoid gender biases Language teacher should be mindful not to favor one gender over the other or perpetuate myths about gender-based learning abilities.

6. Providing Regular Practice Opportunities

Students reported that they often do not use English outside the classroom, limiting their exposure and practice. To address this, schools should provide regular opportunities for students to practice English in both academic and informal settings.

7. Incorporating Non-Cognitive Factors into Curriculum Design

The research underscores the importance of non-cognitive factors such as motivation, self-confidence, and curiosity in SLA. Curriculum designers should integrate activities that promote these traits, fostering a more holistic approach to language learning.

8. Encouraging Intrinsic Motivation and Curiosity

Providing choice and autonomy: Giving students the option to explore language topics of personal interest can significantly enhance their intrinsic motivation, using creative and engaging material. Lessons that include games, storytelling, and projects can stimulate curiosity and make language learning more enjoyable. Encouraging students to set personal language learning goals, both short-term and long-term, helps them remain motivated and engaged in the learning process.

9. Leveraging the Environment for Language Acquisition

Create language-rich environments in Schools can provide access to libraries, multimedia resources, and language labs to expose students to the target language outside the classroom.

10. Focus on Daily Language Practice

Schools should organize events, games, or discussions that require daily use of the target language and Encouraging students to use the target language in subjects like science, history, or math can provide additional practice in varied contexts.

11. Teacher Training and Professional Development

Understanding Non-Cognitive Factors: Teachers should be trained to recognize and address non-cognitive factors like motivation and anxiety in their students. Workshops and professional development programs should focus on equipping teachers with strategies to create a supportive and anxiety-reducing learning environment.

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