

The Implementation of a Linguistic Ability Test as a Selection Basis in Learning English as a Foreign Language

Lamia ELMECHTA

Faculty of Arts and Languages, University of Mentouri Brothers, Constantine 1

Abstract

The aim of the current paper was twofold: first, to design a test of linguistic ability on the basis of a cognitive perspective; and second, to examine its effects on success in foreign language learning. Two cognitive linguistic abilities, namely language aptitude and working memory, were highlighted and predicted to be components of the target measure. To this end, a test of each of the so hypothesized components was administered to sixty subjects (freshmen) at the department of Letters and the English language, university of Mentouri Brothers, Constantine 1. Correlations were subsequently made between the obtained scores in both tests, and principal component analysis was conducted to determine the final linguistic ability measure. A further correlational study was carried out to investigate the relationship between this latter, as with its hypothesized components, and foreign language learning achievement. The results substantiated significant interrelationships between all the variables. These results would recommend the implementation of this test in foreign language learning.

Keywords: cognitive perspective, correlation, language aptitude, linguistic ability measure, working memory