

Abstract of a research paper

THE APTITUDE FACTOR IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Foreign language aptitude is an important learner variable that contributes to the fact that adults differ in their rate and ease of foreign language learning. There is a special talent for language which seems to be a significant factor in determining success in foreign language study; a relatively fixed capacity which helps to explain why some adults encounter insurmountable difficulty upon studying a foreign language, while others excel with ease.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between foreign language learning aptitude and achievement. To this effect, the examen de aptitud para el aprendizaje de un idioma extranjero was developed and administered to 96 students at the Instituto Mexicano Norteamericano de Relaciones Culturales in Mexico City. The aptitude scores were correlated with the achievement scores on a measure of attainment in a first-level functional English course.

The following conclusion may be drawn from the causal analysis of the data of this research project: A remarkably high percentage of variance in achievement in a functional English curriculum (46% in this case) can possibly be explained by variance in foreign language learning aptitude. The findings also substantiate the idea that foreign language learning aptitude is a complex, rather than unitary ability, that consists of various cognitive elements, such as grammatical sensitivity, sound-symbol association, rote learning ability, and verbal knowledge. Lastly, the

gave
evidence of being an effective measure of the ability that it was designed to assess.

CURRENT RESEARCH

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