

## Factors that affect the learning process of a foreign language

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### Abstract

Learning as a complicated process and very significant one is followed by different influencers that cause different problems due to students' performance in learning a foreign language. In order to work and try to eliminate such factors we have to detect which are the factors that we as teachers, professors, assistants, have to carry on during the process of teaching. This theoretical research paper will provide scientific data due to different factors that affect learning process of foreign language that were conducted in different places among the world. The researches that are selected are coherently linked with the aim of this scientific paper and have ensured results from cases studies, quantitative research, and empirical research.

**Keywords:** Learning, teaching, English language, learning factors.

### Introduction

Learning a foreign language can be differentiated from any other subject, for the reason that goes beyond learning formulas, or history periods. All languages in all over the world carry different "packages" of language constructions, spelling, pronunciations, vocabularies, body language, sign language, and etc. Learning a new language means understanding the concept of others' living life which can be so different compared to the person's life that is learning a foreign language.

Due to these differences or characteristics that languages share means that the process of learning any of world foreign languages is seemed to be very complicated process and requires great efforts in mastering it. Learning as a process is closed enough related to teaching as a process, since these two processes cannot achieve their goals because rely in one another. Generally means that the failure of one of these two processes alarms the failure of another process, which leads us as students and teachers to collaborate and help each other in order that these two processes to achieve the learning outcomes.

Albanian language and English language share a lot of differences and a few similarities among them. The culture of both languages differs in many things, in which such differences make a comparative grammar and spelling as well as pronouncing. Related to these differences Albanian people, pupils, or students who have studied or are studying English language face many challenges in order to master the learning process of English language.

Such issues are not found only in learning English language but it can be found out in different languages. In addition such problems have been discussed and analyzed by different scholars or researches that have done great research work in finding factors that affect the learning process of foreign language.

## Literature Review

According to Hijazi & Navqi (2006) the performance of students is always affected by different factors such as learning abilities, since different factors might have great impact on students' performance.

Whereas Montero & Chaves & Alvaro (2014) state that the relationship between learners' background and their motivational traits are so much complex that it has been believed that motivation plays significant role in ensuring great success on learning process.

On the other hand Yam, Rhoades, Sweeny, Kaput, and Yam (2002) support the idea that age levels, specific academic skills, and specific subject matter do not take into consideration sufficiently the complexity of factors such as students' various characteristics. Furthermore they state that in order to find different factors that affect students' performance is to train teachers to adopt instruction to the diverse student's abilities, learning styles, and etc.

Points which can help teachers to find factors and help students to face challenges during the learning process are: ability levels, and patterns of different abilities, learning styles, personality characteristics (ibid).

Different factors that facilitate learning process and can help students in mastering any subject, especially in learning a foreign language are: readiness, motivation, mental health, and teacher's personality (Kumar) (n.d).

## The purpose of this study

The purpose or the aim of this study is:

- to find out how many factors affect learning process of any foreign language;
- to what extent such factors may impact the process;

## Methodology

The methodology that has been used in this research is theoretical research, which will provide different researches that have been done so far due to learning factors. The theoretical research is supported by four different researchers and their collected data from researches that were done in different schools, universities, case studies around the world. Researches that will be discussed and elaborated in this theoretical research are:

- A case study in Pacific Campus, University of Costa Rica;
- Case study in Private Colleges, in Pakistan;
- A quantitative research, Research University, Southeastern United States;

## Discussion

The case study conducted in Pacific Campus included 56 participants (females and males) of first year and second of English teaching Major (Montero, Chaves, Alvarado, 2014). The researchers did the study with students who had scholarships, by means that their economic situation was very specific. Their purpose was to focus on:

- Language accusation;
- Age;
- Socioeconomic context;

-Linguistic background and;

-How does the social context motivate or influence people in the learning process of foreign language?

According to their research on above mentioned points even though students did not start to learn English during their childhood they had positive attitude towards language learning. Also economic situation play a significant role in students' performance, since according to conducted results those students who attend private courses performed better than the others who cannot afford attending private courses. Linguistic background as very important factor was not highly found since students provide poor linguistic background. Hence, all the factors which researchers studied on students of the Costa Rica University show that each of these factors impact the learning process of students.

The second case study done in private colleges in Pakistan shows some other factors which influence students' performance in the learning process (Hijazi&Naqvi, 2006). The researchers were focused to research the impact of these factors, such as:

- Student's attitude towards attendance in class,
- Hours spent in study on daily bases after college,
- Students' family income,
- Students' mother's age,
- Mother's education.

The data that researchers found on this case study is that students who have their educated mothers performed very well in comparing with students that performed poorly since their mothers were illiterate. According to this important factor that affect students in Pakistan is the education of the mother, since students the majority of their time pass with their mothers because fathers usually are not at home or they travel a lot. This it means that the education of parents which in this case is of mothers can be considered a very important factor which leads to the success or failure of students.

Age of mothers is considered to be another factor from this case study, since it is proved that mothers who are at young ages can handle their children and can work with them in compared with those who are aged and cannot deal with children's needs and help.

On the other hand the case study could not prove that the family income is one of the factors that affect student's learning, since according to their data is proven as negatively. Also the hours spent in study on daily bases after college is proven as negatively , because this factor cannot impact students' performance , because researchers state that " students' performance is depended on intelligence level, intellect, memory, or method of learning of student" (Hijazi&Naqvi, 2006:9).

The third research as quantitative one conducted in Research University in the southeastern United States found that teachers' performance is one of the most significant factors that affect students' learning process. According to them teachers as facilitators should give great efforts in engaging students in process of learning, by using different methodologies, and activities. According to Celia (2010) the learning environments in which students learn influence a lot their performance. Methodologies, instructors, technology, designed classrooms; seating arrangements

should always be flexible in order to break the students' routine and have a positive effect on students' learning process (ibid).

## Conclusions

Factors that affect learning as a process in general may be enormous in number and it cannot be always concluded that there are limits to them. Students are rounded by different circumstances and can be large in number which leads to detect different factors that influence students' performance.

According to this theoretical research can be stated that factors which affect students' performance in learning a foreign language are diverse, and their impact differs from one country to another one. Factors that showed great influence on students' learning process mostly were the socioeconomic situation, parents' education, teachers' role, and so on. Actually such factors will be always pointed as influencers on students' learning process since are inevitable to students' life.

Teachers as facilitators of learning process play a significant role in helping students to face challenges and difficulties that may come up from such factors, but the family and socioeconomic situation are factors in which teachers cannot actually interfere because all parts have to collaborate with each other in order to help students to master in any foreign language. Collaboration between a parent and a student is a must for the reason that a student will not have any space left to fail in learning process. When we really have to deal with illiterate parents or uneducated one it is very difficult to manage their child since the collaboration or communication with them will be meaningless and worthless.

As mentioned above such factors will never end and will always be part of learning process but there are always solutions and flexibilities that will help teachers, students, teachers to face challenges and work on the success of their students/children.

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