

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS ON TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR CHILDREN: The Case Study at undergraduate Students at Jalo Schools, in Al- Wahat

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الآثار النفسية لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للأطفال: دراسة حالة على طلاب المرحلة
الجامعية الأولى في مدارس جالو، في الواحات

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Abstract:

This study investigates the influence of psychological and environmental factors on the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning process, with a specific focus on preparatory-grade students at Hafsa School in Jalo, Libya. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research collects data through questionnaires administered to English teachers to identify the primary challenges students encounter and to uncover the underlying causes of their academic difficulties. The findings reveal several critical issues affecting the educational environment. First, students' physical health significantly impacts academic performance, as illness naturally hinders achievement. Second, the results indicate a considerable gap between parents and their children's educational lives due to demanding work schedules, severely limiting parental involvement. Third, the study uncovers a strong consensus among teachers regarding the harmfulness of corporal punishment, with educators firmly opposing the practice and recommending its complete abolition. Additionally, the findings underscore the importance of understanding cross-cultural linguistic nuances and utilizing diverse, engaging teaching techniques. Based on these conclusions, the study offers practical recommendations, including educational system revisions, instructional diversification, strict regulations against physical punishment, and consistent home-school communication.

Keywords: Foreign Language, Teaching Methods, Language, Psychological Effects.

المخلص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في تأثير العوامل النفسية والبيئية على عملية تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على طلاب مرحلة التعليم الإعدادي في مدرسة حفصة بمدينة جالو في ليبيا. واستخداماً لمنهجية مختلطة، جمع البحث البيانات من خلال استبانات وزعت على معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية لتحديد التحديات الأساسية التي تواجه الطلاب الكشف عن الأسباب الكامنة وراء تعثرهم الأكاديمي. وتكشف النتائج عن عدة قضايا حرجية تؤثر على البيئة التعليمية؛ أولاً، تؤثر الصحة البدنية للطلاب بشكل كبير على الأداء الأكاديمي حيث يعيق المرض التحصيل. ثانياً، تشير النتائج إلى وجود فجوة كبيرة بين أولياء الأمور والحياة التعليمية لأطفالهم بسبب متطلبات العمل، مما يحد بشدة من المشاركة الأسرية.

ثالثاً، تبرز الدراسة إجماعاً قوياً بين المعلمين بشأن الأضرار الناتجة عن العقاب البدني، حيث يعارض المعلمون هذه الممارسة بحزم ويوصون بإلغائها تماماً. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تؤكد النتائج على أهمية فهم الفروق اللغوية الثقافية واستخدام تقنيات تدريس متنوعة. وبناءً على هذه الاستنتاجات، تقدم الدراسة توصيات عملية تشمل مراجعة النظام التعليمي، تنويع طرق التدريس، فرض لوائح صارمة ضد العقاب البدني، وتعزيز التواصل المستمر بين الأسرة والمدرسة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تعلم اللغات الأجنبية، طرق التدريس، العوامل النفسية، أداء الطلاب، اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية.

1. Introduction

International empirical research has shown that a person who starts learning a foreign language very early in his life generally acquire higher level of proficiency than those who begin at later stages (Penfield, 1967; Taylor and Taylor, 1990; and Snow, 1993).

However, other studies assumed that starting age will have the same influence on students of a foreign language, when they are exposed to only one speaker of that language (the teacher who is not usually a native speaker) in only one setting (the classroom) and only during very limited amount of time.

From those who were interested in L2/FL learning, began the motivation to investigate the process of acquisition a foreign language by learners with different starting ages. In this study, the researcher examines EFL learning in Hafsa School.

Different age groups for starting learning English as a foreign language are considered they are surrounded by their native Arabic environment the settings are both public and private schools for males and females under the supervision of the Ministry of Education in Libya.

1.2 Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The background of the study chosen because of the following reasons:

- 1) The expected results of this study can solve psychological effects for Preparatory grade students.
- 2) The researcher gets reinforcement and guidance for conducting this research in the field.
- 3) The researcher observed that most Preparatory -grade students have lacks of learning (EFL).
- 4) The outcomes of this research expected to improve Preparatory grade students dealing with such difficulties.
- 5) The researcher expected to provide some recommendations based on the research result from teachers.

1.3 Problem Statement

The main problem of this study is to investigate Preparatory-grade students' difficulties in learning (EFL) teaching field in Hafsa School, Jalo. This study suggests that preparatory-grade student has many problems in learning (EFL).

The research questions are as the following:

- 1) Do students encounter any psychological factors effecting on the process of learning (EFL)?
- 2) What are the student's efforts to overcome these difficulties?
- 3) What is the teacher's role in helping the students to cope with these difficulties?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The aims of this study are:

- 1) To describe the causes of learning (EFL) difficulties and it is related with psychological effects.
- 2) To know how the students work in the classroom to overcome these difficulties.
- 3) To know the framework made by the teachers and for guiding the students to learning EFL and teaching methods in the classroom.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can view from theoretical, practicable aspects as described below:

- 1) Theoretically, it expected that this research could use as emphasis to determine an approach to improve the students' ability to learn (EFL) easily and perfectly.
- 2) Practically, this research expected to give positive input to the English learner in learning (EFL), Based on this research, the English teachers are able to choose appropriate teaching approach.

2.Literature Review

Some students learn a new language more quickly and easily than others. This simple fact is known by all who have themselves learned a foreign language or taught those who are using a foreign language in school.

Clearly, some language learners are successful by virtue of their sheer determination, hard work and persistence. However, there are other crucial factors influencing success that are largely beyond the control of the learner.

In this chapter the researcher would like to give more information about English Language Teaching Methods, Context for English learning, the factors that influence Learning (EFL) and psychological effects.

2.1 English Language Teaching Methods

There are many teaching methods which are used by a language teacher within the class in order to achieve the learning objectives that are the most important aspect of a unit lesson plan.

The relevance of grammar translation/direct method/audio-lingual approach/bilingual approach/communicative approach to language teaching or computer assisted English teaching depends on the objectives and the situation.

1. The Grammar Translation Methods

According to Brown (2001), The Grammar translation method is also called a classical method. This method came out when the western people world wanted to learn "foreign" languages such as Latin and Greek. The focus of GTM was on grammatical rules, the memorization of vocabulary and of various declensions and conjugations, translations of texts, and doing written exercises.

2. The Direct Method

The basic principle of the Direct Method was that second language learning should be more like first language learning. The method would comprise a great deal of oral interaction, spontaneous use of language, no translation between first and second languages, and little or no analysis of grammar rules.

3. Audio Lingual Methods

The audio-lingual method (ALM) was widely used in the United States and other countries in the 1950's and 1960's. Some programs still use it nowadays. The structural view of language is the view behind this method.

2.2 Psychological Factors Influencing EFL Learning

Numerous variables affect the process of acquiring a foreign language. These variables can be broadly classified into two main categories: internal factors and external factors (Williams, 1997).

Internal Factors

Internal factors encompass physical conditions, psychological states, and exhaustion.

1. Physical Factors

- **Health:** Optimal physical health is essential for effective learning. Learners must maintain their well-being through a balanced routine that includes adequate rest, proper nutrition, relaxation, physical activity, and spiritual practices.
- **Physical Defects:** Learners with physical impairments may need to exert greater effort than their peers. In such cases, specialized educational institutions with tailored support systems can be beneficial.
- **Gender:** Research indicates that female learners often employ a wider range of learning strategies compared to males, although males may surpass females in the use of specific individual strategies.

2. Psychological Factors

- **Intelligence:** Intelligence significantly contributes to the learning process, as it enables individuals to adapt quickly to new situations, grasp abstract concepts effectively, and understand relationships between ideas.
- **Attention:** Attention, defined as sustained mental focus and concentration, is critical for academic achievement. Students who become disengaged or bored are likely to underperform in their studies.
- **Interest:** Interest refers to a persistent tendency to engage with and enjoy particular activities or subject matter. A lack of interest in a lesson can severely hinder a student's ability to learn effectively.
- **Aptitude:** Aptitude represents an individual's natural capacity to learn. Since aptitude varies from person to person, learners should strive to maximize their inherent potential through consistent study and extensive practice.
- **Motivation:** Motivation is an affective-conative force that directs an individual's behavior toward a specific goal, whether consciously or unconsciously. Teachers must cultivate strong motivation to capture students' attention. Studies show that highly motivated learners tend to use more strategies than those with low motivation, and the specific reasons for learning a language—particularly career-related orientations—significantly influence strategy selection.

3. Exhaustion

Exhaustion can occur both physically and psychologically. Psychological fatigue often manifests as boredom, apathy, or loss of motivation. These conditions can adversely affect academic performance. However, exhaustion can be alleviated through adequate sleep, rest, varied study routines, relaxation, spiritual practices, physical exercise, or professional psychological support.

External Factors

External factors are categorized into three groups: family factors, school factors, and social factors.

1. Family Factors

- **Parenting Style:** The way parents raise and educate their children has a profound impact on their development, as the family serves as the primary and most influential educator.
- **Family Relationships:** Harmonious relationships among family members—between parents and children, as well as among siblings—contribute to a student's academic success.
- **Home Atmosphere:** A quiet and peaceful home environment is ideal, as it encourages children to feel settled and enables them to study effectively.
- **Economic Status:** Families must be able to provide basic educational necessities such as food, clothing, books, furniture, and other learning materials.

- **Parental Understanding:** Parents should offer support and encouragement, especially when their children experience a decline in interest or motivation toward their studies.

2. School Factors

- **Teaching Methods:** Teachers require ongoing training in three key areas: identifying students' current learning strategies through surveys and observation, helping individuals select strategies that align with their learning styles and goals, and guiding students toward integrated and coherent strategy use rather than fragmented approaches.
- **Curriculum:** The curriculum should be appropriate for students' ages and language proficiency levels, as learners at different stages tend to employ different strategies.
- **Learning Style:** Learning style profoundly influences the choice of language learning strategies. For instance, analytical learners often favor strategies such as contrastive analysis, rule memorization, and deconstructing words, whereas global learners prefer meaning-based strategies like guessing, scanning, predicting, and paraphrasing.
- **Student-Teacher Relationship:** Effective teaching and learning occur within positive, cooperative classroom dynamics. Grounded in integrity, the teaching profession requires six core behaviors: caring, maintaining high standards, providing intellectually stimulating experiences, effective classroom management, maintaining a student-centered focus, and engaging in reflective practice.
- **Peer Relationships:** Establishing positive relationships among students is essential, as they can exert a beneficial influence on academic performance.
- **Discipline:** Discipline applies to everyone within the school community, not just teachers and students. Adherence to established rules ensures a well-controlled and orderly learning environment.
- **Schedule:** Effective time management and well-organized schedules have a positive impact on the teaching-learning process.
- **School Infrastructure:** The physical size and facilities of the school should be adequate to accommodate the student population.
- **Type of Task:** The nature of a given task influences the specific strategies that learners naturally employ to complete it.
- **Attitudes and Beliefs:** Learners' attitudes and beliefs significantly affect their strategy choices; negative perceptions often lead to poor strategy use or a lack of organized application.
- **Tolerance of Ambiguity:** Students who demonstrate higher tolerance for ambiguity often adopt different learning strategies compared to those who exhibit lower tolerance.

3. Social Factors

- **Student Activities:** Students should limit social activities that may interfere with their studies and instead choose beneficial engagements such as courses, workshops, or group discussions.
- **Mass Media:** Exposure to various forms of mass media—including cinemas, radio, television, newspapers, and magazines—requires thoughtful guidance and supervision from parents and educators within the family, school, and society.
- **Companionship:** Peer influence can be swift and powerful. Students who associate with positive, supportive friends are more likely to experience beneficial academic outcomes.

- **Social Interaction:** Interactions with a diverse range of people can influence students' academic performance, making it important for them to choose their social networks wisely.

3. METHODOLOGIES

The researcher uses (SPSS) to analyze the data collected by the questionnaire, the questionnaire is an instrument used to collect data from English teachers, of the school in Jalo Hafsa School.

3.1 Data

Data are any information about all cases related to the aims of research. According to Saleh (2012), data collection is the peak activity in research.

To carry out this activity the researcher has to go to the field, which means that he has to meet the people who became the source of his research data. the researcher gathered data by making the observation, conducting interviews, or studying available documents.

3.2 Procedure for Data Collection

Before the data collection started, official permission to visit the schools selected was obtained from the English department in Benghazi University and Libya Ministry of Education.

The researcher invited twenty 20 English language teachers from Hafsa School to participate in this study. The selection process was based on Experience and Grade Level the questionnaire consisted of 40 closed questions.

3.3 Data Analysis

In order to test the research hypotheses, several analyses were required. These analyses required comparison of young students' performance. Because it was desired to test hypotheses regarding the age of EFL instruction initiation, SPSS was used to analyze the data.

This research used qualitative data obtained from questionnaire applied during this research. Moreover, quantitative data for supporting results with numeric data and charts. The analysis of data shows the difficulties encountered by preparatory grade students in Hafsa School, Jalo.

4. DISCUSSIONS:

This chapter had overseen the research, analysis and interpretation of data gathered by the researcher. This study aims to determine the effects of psychological aspects on the Libyan learners in learning English as a foreign language. The questionnaire for the teachers as follow:

1) You use a diversity of reinforcement methods to increases student's motivation of learning. A. 100% true B. 80% true C. 50% true D. 20% true E. Not true at all.



Figure 1

As we can see from this chart 60% of the teachers agree that reinforcement method does affect in direct way in the teaching process and it really help a lot.

On the other hand, 20% of the teachers fully agree with this method and other 20% still not sure about the reliability of this method.

2) You use a diversity of activities and methods in classroom.

A. 100% true B. 80% true C. 50% true D. 20% true E. Not true at all.

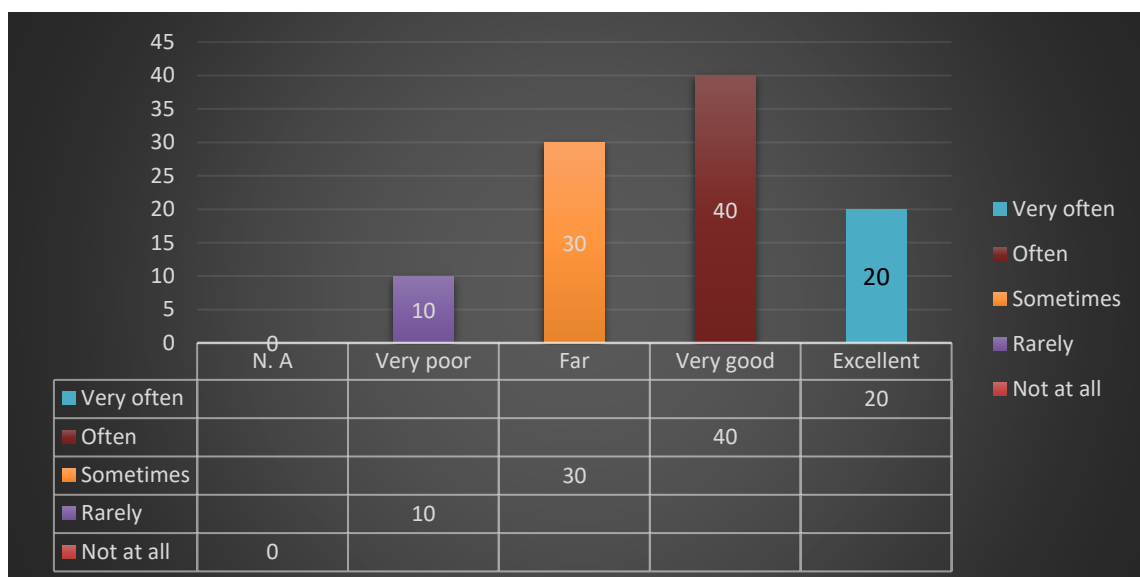


Figure 2

It is obvious that this chart gives close answer to the question 20% were given as they completely support this way and used it while 10% are a bit sure of the success of this way at the main time 40% were given to D which refer to 80% and 30% were given as a part of not being sure but still, they have some doubt about this way.

3) Parents communicate with the school to inquire about their academic status.

A. 100% true B. 80% true C. 50% true D. 20% true E. Not true at all



Figure 3

As we can see from this chart above only 10% of the parents ask about their children that is not good at all and 20% often ask about their children and half of them 50% ask about their children from this chart the researcher can say that the parents are far from their children due to their work and other things and we can say that this is one of the main issue that the students face if they don't contact with the school how they will know about the level of their child.

- 4) You think that the health status of the student affects his or her academic achievement.
 A. 100% true B. 80% true C. 50% true D. 20% true E. Not true at all.



Figure 4

According to this chart the researcher finds that 30% are agree that the health statue of the student effected in many ways and other 40% stated that student effected by the health statue due to the ability of the students if they were ill sure they will not achieve as much as when they are well on the other hand others 30% said it effects but not to those extents.

5. CONCLUSION

At the end of this research, the researcher would like to highlight the most important points drawn from the study. Firstly, the teachers unanimously agree that the reinforcement method has a direct and highly beneficial impact on the teaching process, significantly aiding student progress. Additionally, it was found that students' health status plays a crucial role in their academic achievement, as illness naturally hinders their ability to perform as effectively as Furthermore, the teachers fully acknowledge that students face considerable challenges

stemming from difficulties encountered in previous academic terms, which continue to affect their current learning; in this context, they also emphasize that understanding the cultural aspects between languages is critically important for successful acquisition. On a more sensitive note, the majority of teachers expressed that physical punishment does not positively affect students' performance or achievement. On the contrary, they firmly oppose this practice, stating that students must never be beaten, especially in front of their peers, and they strongly recommend that such methods be completely abolished in schools. Finally, the study reveals that parents are often distant from their children's educational lives due to demanding work schedules and other commitments, and this lack of involvement is identified as one of the primary issues that students currently face in their learning journey.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several key recommendations are proposed to enhance the educational experience for students.

First and foremost, the current teaching system in schools must be thoroughly reconsidered and revised to better meet the needs of learners. In this regard, teachers are strongly encouraged to employ a diverse range of teaching techniques and methods, rather than relying on a single approach, in order to accommodate different learning styles and keep students engaged.

Furthermore, parents have a vital role to play and must actively follow up on their children's progress throughout the study process, as their involvement is essential for academic success.

At the administrative level, school authorities must issue and enforce a clear rule that strictly prohibits beating students in any way, as physical punishment has proven to be ineffective and harmful. Additionally, teachers are urged to show greater care and attention toward their students, recognizing that emotional and psychological support is just as important as academic instruction.

Finally, school administrations should establish regular and consistent communication with parents to keep them informed about their children's performance and progress. The researcher sincerely hopes that this piece of work will prove valuable and serve as a helpful resource for students in their further studies.

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