

Assessing cognitive abilities for L2 learning: A review of accessible tools

The main aim of this talk is to discuss the relevance of different types of cognitive abilities for a range of processes in second language learning and present a selection of tools that are available for their assessment in the classroom. A better understanding of the learner's cognitive differences provides an invaluable source of information to tailor L2 intervention and enhance its effectiveness across the ability spectrum.

In this presentation I will start by providing a brief overview of the most important memory-related cognitive abilities and discuss their relevance for language learning and processing in neurotypical and neurodiverse learners. The abilities include short-term memory, working memory and abilities implicated in long-term retention of linguistic knowledge (Kormos, 2013; Pili-Moss, 2018).

Next, I will review a selection of accessible techniques and computerised tools that are available to teachers for conducting an initial, non-clinical cognitive assessment. These include, among others, tools for the assessment of working memory and the CAMLA battery (Smith, 2015).

The talk will conclude with a discussion of the advantages of an increased awareness of cognitive abilities and of their assessment for a range of stakeholders including teachers and learners in schools, universities and further education.

References

Kormos, J. (2013). New conceptualizations of language aptitude in second language attainment. In G. Granena, & M. Long (Eds.), *Sensitive periods, language aptitude, and ultimate L2 attainment* (pp. 131-152). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

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