

O'Keefe, Catherine, 1996, *Some learner factors underlying individual differences in second language learning*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine some learner factors which account for differential success among learners of second languages. It is intended that the information outlined would be of value to teachers at primary and secondary levels at least, who are engaged in the teaching of second languages, in that it would raise their consciousness about their students as individuals, and about the need to cater for their individual needs in both the cognitive and the affective domains.

Three learner factors are examined by means of a review of relevant research literature. Research on language aptitude, motivation and attitudes, cognitive *style* and learning strategies, as they pertain to individual differences (ID) in second language learning, is surveyed. Throughout the chapters consideration is given to how schools and teachers may be enlightened by the knowledge gained from the literature when they embark upon educational planning and practice.

The study concludes with an appraisal of the current state of research in the field of ID together with some recommendations as to how those involved in the teaching of second languages may address some of the pedagogical implications of the evidence uncovered. Finally, reference is made to how the teaching of second languages in primary schools in Ireland with perhaps a particular emphasis on the Irish language may benefit from the insights gained into the learner factors investigated here.