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## ***Learning Strategies of Gifted Students as a Factor of Success In Foreign Language for Specific Purposes Learning***

### **Extended summary**

The theoretical basis of this research is Sternberg’s theory of mental self-management and Deci’s theory of self-regulation. The method of systematic non-experimental observation was applied, while the research aims to determine the learning strategies applied by gifted students and their significance for learning effects in order to meet the requirements to develop learning strategies in the aspect of foreign language learning. It will also help them to be more independent and autonomous in their learning, i.e., to self-regulate their foreign language acquisition. The research has an exploratory character and a quantitative approach. The sample is appropriate and refers to 200 students from the University of Novi Sad and the University of Belgrade. Academically gifted students (N = 19) had an average grade point higher than 9.70 in their studies. The instruments used are: the foreign language proficiency test, developed for this research; the Questionnaire OP-General Data; and Oxford’s Strategy Inventory of Foreign Language Learning (SILL)-modified version (German, English).

The main findings of the research indicate that the differences between academically gifted and other students on the scales of different strategies are not statistically significant, but that the differences in proactive and experiential strategies are very close to significant and indicate that gifted people use these strategies more than other students. Also, the level of lan-

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guage acquisition is related to the choice of learning strategies used by the gifted, and both the analysis of latent groups and the analysis of variance confirmed the existence of statistically significant differences between individual groups, indicating that the latent profile (high use of proactive and experiential strategies) achieves significantly higher results on the test, separating them from others. Therefore, the level of language acquisition is related to the choice of learning strategies.

Research findings also indicate that experiential strategies predominate among the gifted, which has also been reflected in success. Thus, the level of language acquisition is related to the choice of learning strategies that the gifted use. Academically gifted students, with strategic knowledge of language learning, become more efficient, resourceful, and flexible compared to those who do not, which facilitates language acquisition. They can also develop, personalize, and use a repertoire of learning strategies, which makes it easier to master the expected levels of achievement. Small differences in the level of success in learning foreign language could be interpreted as the fact that strategies appear as a factor in self-regulation of foreign language learning and that their structure is slightly different from others. The essential difference is reflected in greater proactive and experiential strategies in relation to other students. Proactive strategies have proven to be more present in academically gifted people, but also in those who have been learning a foreign language for a long time. This can be interpreted as the ability to participate in communication and language acquisition due to knowledge, and it leads to stronger motivation. In line with the previous one, there is a significant conclusion that there is a difference in the level of adoption of certain strategies among the examined students, which is of great importance for the practical moves of teachers. They can personalize instructions and thus provide an opportunity for students to more confidently self-regulate in foreign language learning.

Theoretical structuring of the concept of learning strategies is also important for the practical aspects of research: operationalization of the concept in instruments for recording learning strategies, and finally, for the practical orientation of teachers in mentoring students in self-regulation of learning strategies. It is, therefore, a methodological aspect of this research that talks about the difference in the number and components of structuring learning strategies based on the difference in the operationalization of the system of self-regulation, i.e., learning strategies. This research shows that they were structured in a different way, which supports the discourse on the problem of a unified understanding of the definition of criteria for language learning strategies, which has not been surpassed. Thus, these findings fit into the discourse of the current question: whether learning strategies should be viewed as observable behaviors or internal mental operations, or both (Dörnyei, 2005). And it could be added that this is not only an issue of interest to researchers in the field of foreign language learning, but it also refers to broader areas of pedagogical psychology and serves as an empirical validation of components of strategies in the field of foreign language learning. In addition, it makes a modest contribution to the methodological aspect of this topic.

**Keywords:** gifted students, learning strategies in foreign language for specific purposes learning, self-regulation

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