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Field Independence and Dependence and High School English Reading Teaching

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Abstract: The English Curriculum Standards for General High Schools (2017 Edition) (hereinafter referred to as the "Standards") clearly stipulate that reading is one of the basic skills mastered by high school students, and it accounts for a relatively large proportion in the college entrance examination. At the high school level, students should develop the five basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation, focusing on the cultivation of reading ability. Students should be able to read materials about biographies, fables, etc. With the help of dictionaries, students should be able to grasp the main facts and central ideas, and grasp the main logical clues of the material they read. Reading is a complex cognitive process. Reading is an important means of information input and a cognitive activity. Cognitive style is the preferred information processing method in individual cognitive activities, and field independence and field dependence cognitive style are the core of cognitive style. Through the discussion of field dependence and field independence cognitive style, this article analyses the differences between field independence and field dependence students' learning behavior to explore the influence of students' cognitive style on teachers' reading teaching strategies and reading material choices, so as to improve students' reading ability.

Keywords: Field Independence; Field Dependence; High School English; Reading.

1. Introduction

English as an important part of the high school curriculum. The English Curriculum Standards for General High Schools (2017 Edition) (hereinafter referred to as the "Standards") clearly stipulates: "At the high school level, students should develop the five basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation, focusing on the cultivation of reading ability. Students should be able to read materials about biographies, fables, etc. With the help of dictionaries, students should be able to grasp the main facts and central ideas, and grasp the main logical clues of the material they read" (Ministry of Education, 2017:46). This shows the importance of reading. However, in English learning, students with different cognitive styles have different abilities to receive and understand information, which will not only produce different reading effects, but also interfere with students' choice of reading topics and reading strategies. Therefore, teachers should take advantage of the wide range of topics and diverse genres of current high school English reading textbooks to adopt corresponding reading teaching strategies for students with different cognitive styles.

2. Field Dependence and Field Independent Cognitive Style

As a psychological term, cognitive mode refers to the individual differences that people show when processing information experience, and is the attitude and way that individuals often adopt in the process of perception, memory, and thinking. The term was first used by Allport in 1937 to refer to the habituated ways that individuals often adopt in cognitive processes. Specifically, it is the way of the individual in the process of perception, memory, thinking and problem solving (Zhang Hengchao, 2022:45). The study of cognitive ways began in the 40s of the 20th century, was very popular in the 60s, and gradually declined after reaching its peak in the early 70s. Since the beginning of the 90s, the study of cognitive ways has once again attracted great attention, and applied research in the field of education has become more and more important (Davis, 2006:92). The types of cognitive modes include: field dependence and field independence, prudence and impulsivity and so on. The most typical of these are the field dependent and field independent type. The cognitive style of field independence and field dependence plays an important role in reading.

The concepts of field independence and field dependence were first proposed by the American "father of cognitive style" Holman Witkin in 1977: "When presenting a dominant field, more independent individuals tend to overcome the organization of the field or reconstruct it; and the individual tendency of the field dependence and the organization attached to the given field".(L &W, 2022:356). In other words, field independence means that individuals rely on the internal reference of the control of their own lives to obtain knowledge and information from their own perception; Field dependence refers to the fact that individuals use the external reference of their own surrounding environment to define knowledge and information by their own ability from the stimuli of the environment. There are also large differences in the learning styles of people with these two learning styles (Chen, 2021:322).

3. Field-dependent and Field-independent Learning Characteristics of Students

3.1. Differences in Thinking

Students Who Are Independent Tend to Think divergently, like to try new learning and seek answers to questions from many aspects, and often come up with different ideas and insights. Students who are dependent on the field often show a tendency to follow the rules, rely on and be organized in learning, prefer routine and seek common ground, and like to start from the existing way of understanding to find ways to solve problems.

3.2. Differences in Learning Strategies

Independent students often show greater independence from things, strong autonomy, like to study and think independently, good at discovering problems, and can reorganize the knowledge taught by teachers or learned in books into their own knowledge. Field dependents are easily influenced by others' hints, and need feedback, homework objectives and lessons to be explained in detail.

3.3. Differences in Motivation for Learning

Independent students tend to be intrinsically motivated to learn, have strong intrinsic motivation and are aware of the importance of learning. You don't have to rely on the encouragement of teachers and the praise of your classmates. For students who are more likely to be extrinsic motivation, the encouragement of teachers or parents will greatly stimulate their enthusiasm for learning, on the contrary, a little criticism will make their interest in learning significantly decrease.

3.4. Differences in Problem-Solving Skills

Field independents prefer non-social subjects with cognitive restructuring skills, such as these students who are good at studying natural science courses such as mathematics, nature, and computers; Field dependents, on the other hand, have poor skills in cognitive restructuring and prefer interpersonal disciplines, such as humanities and social disciplines such as language and foreign languages.

3.5. Differences in Teaching Methods

Field independents are easy to provide structure for unstructured materials, and it is easier to adapt to teaching methods with loose structure. On the contrary, field dependents prefer teaching with a tight structure, because they need teachers to provide external structures, hope that teachers will organize teaching in an orderly manner, and need clear guidance and explanation from teachers.

3.6. Differences in Educational Contexts

Field independents are not or rarely affected by external environmental factors in the learning process, and they study and think independently, study personally, like to compete and obtain individual recognition; In the learning process, field dependents are easily affected by environmental factors and are willing to learn in collective situations, and in the collective, field dependents are more submissive, can get along with others, like to help others, and are full of affection.

4. The Relationship between Field Independence and Field Dependence and English Reading

Reading is a complex cognitive activity, and different cognitive ways will inevitably lead to different reading tendencies and reading habits. In English reading, field-independent and field-dependent students will have distinct differences in all aspects of English reading. The details are as follows:

(1) Influenced by the analytical thinking mode, field independents tend to scrutinize the words and sentences in the text one by one, grasp the whole text from the details, and can choose the correct reading strategy according to the purpose of reading, can effectively monitor the reading process, and are less or not disturbed by irrelevant reading information to complete the reading task with high quality and efficiency. But they are usually slower to read and have difficulty grasping the article as a whole. In contrast, field dependents are good at grasping the main points of the text and sorting out the context of the passage, but in the reading task, the reading material contains a lot of irrelevant information (Liu Zehai, 2017: 62). Field dependents are greatly affected by the external environment, so they are always disturbed by irrelevant information in the reading process and are not easy to jump out of irrelevant reading information.

(2) From the perspective of the type of articles read, field independents like to read articles in natural science, and prefer independent reading. For example, in high school, the expository and explanatory essays divided for different themes and genres have an advantage for field independents when reading this article. Field dependents, on the other hand, prefer to read articles related to people and society.

(3) Field independents often adopt the order of "bottom-up" cognition, using reading materials as information input, and readers start from the identification of letters and words, constantly combine information, and complete reading activities. Field dependents, on the other hand, adopt a "top-down" approach to reading (Wang Xin,2013:71). that is, based on existing syntactic and semantic knowledge in their own brains, use social and cultural background knowledge and expertise to make predictions, and confirm and revise them in the process of reading.

Therefore, teachers should adopt appropriate reading teaching strategies for students with different cognitive styles.

5. The Enlightenment of Field Independence and Field Dependence cognitive Style on Reading Teaching

Students with different cognitive styles have different performance in high school English reading comprehension In order to optimize the teaching of English reading in high schools, teachers should implement corresponding teaching strategies.

5.1. From a Macro Perspective, Cultivate the Reading Ability of Students with Field-Independent and Field-Dependent

(1) Teachers should have educational scientific research methods such as psychoanalysis and behavioral observation, and be good at understanding the cognitive styles of different learners, familiar with their learning habits, and examine the adaptability of various teaching strategies and different cognitive styles through daily observation, interviews, tests and questionnaires. The two cognitive styles have their own advantages and disadvantages, and there is no difference between advantages and disadvantages, so teachers should treat each student's cognitive style correctly, and help students understand their own cognitive style, and have a clear understanding of the shortcomings of their cognitive style (Wu Jing,2009:78). Teachers should fully respect students' cognitive methods, reasonably arrange and organize teaching according to learners' individual learning tendencies, teach according to aptitude, and give full play to the advantages of their respective cognitive styles. In addition, it is necessary to guide and promote the comprehensive and harmonious development of students. Because, the learner's cognitive style is a variable dimension. Learners who show a high degree of autonomy in one area may be highly dependent in

another. Most learners' cognitive styles are not either/or extremes, and some can change their styles to suit different tasks.

(2) Choose appropriate reading materials. Field independents and field dependents have their own preferences in the type of reading material, and each has its own strengths and weaknesses in ability. In view of the above-mentioned above, high school students with strong field independence should be given more practice in topics such as popular science and argumentation, while high school students with strong dependence on the field should be allowed to read more articles with strong humanistic knowledge and biographies. This matching material can meet the learning needs of different cognitive styles, and can increase students' interest and self-confidence. At the same time, it is also necessary to provide reading materials that are mismatched with students in order to improve the comprehensive development of students' comprehensive ability. In the choice of difficulty of reading materials, moderate difficulty is better.

(3) develop reading strategies that are both matched and mismatched. In terms of the choice of reading strategies and methods, field independents and field dependents are significantly different. This requires teachers to adopt matching reading strategies that promote the role on the one hand, such as giving the field independents more free and independent space for self-reflection and exploration, and allowing the field dependents to read more articles about the humanities background. On the other hand, it is also necessary to adopt mismatched reading strategies to compensate for the role, such as analytical teaching for field-dependent students, encouraging their independent learning, and conducting group teaching, holistic teaching, and open teaching for field-independent students.

5.2. From a Microscopic Perspective, Cultivate the Reading Ability of Students with Field-Independent and Field-Dependent

5.2.1. Improve Students' Reading Skills Through Teaching and Training Field Independence

According to the analysis of the relationship between field-dependent students and reading, teachers should give full play to their strengths and avoid their weaknesses in reading teaching, and adopt corresponding reading teaching countermeasures to improve students' English reading ability.

(1) Focusing on encouragement, guiding students' independent learning field dependents to be easily affected by the environment and negative reinforcement, and the fluctuations are large, so the countermeasures of interval reinforcement can be adopted in reading teaching and group cooperative learning can be carried out. Teachers should encourage and praise students more, so that students are full of self-confidence, especially when students encounter setbacks, timely psychological counseling to guide students out of emotional trough. Field dependents are accustomed to relying on well-organized and well-organized teaching by teachers, so in reading teaching, teachers encourage students to make positive meaning-constructing in reading, rather than passively waiting for the author to tell them. Let field dependents try discovery learning. Cultivate their logical analysis and self-learning skills, and guide students to self-control learning objectives, learning content, and active exploration.

(2) Update concepts and optimize the classroom environment. For a long time, under the influence of "examination-oriented education", China has been practicing the "teacher-centered" teacher ideology, and the same is true in high school reading teaching (Zhang Fengqin,2016,141). Teachers often let students read first, and then teachers proofread the answers and "speak", explaining why this answer is the answer themselves, students only need to passively accept the information, and rarely actively think about "why". Since the 80s of the 20th century, the "student-centered" teaching idea advocated has gradually been implemented in the teaching of high school reading. In fact, the cultivation of students' "field independence" and "student-centeredness" are the same, that is, let students actively read, train students to learn to ask questions about the main points of the reading material, read the following language materials with questions, and find out the important content of the materials. It is necessary to establish a democratic and equal relationship in the classroom and form a harmonious teaching atmosphere.

5.2.2. Improve Students Reading Skills Through Teaching and Training Field Dependence

For students who prefer field independence, in the process of reading teaching, in addition to giving full play to the advantages of field independence, the cultivation of "field dependence" cognitive style should be strengthened, and the following aspects should be taught according to students' English level and their own cognitive development level.

(1) Expand background knowledge. It is an indisputable fact that background knowledge affects reading comprehension. Johnson (1972) argues that the process of comprehension is a process of interaction between background knowledge and the content of a passage. Background knowledge is especially important for English learners in China. Because from the current situation in China, English is a foreign language for students. Students' mastery of background knowledge of English culture usually requires conscious learning; Their level of English cannot be compared to that of native English speakers. For the same article, the background knowledge is weaker, and the high language level can make up for it to a certain extent; When the language level is not high, background knowledge can also make up for it. Independents do not know much about humanities and cultural background, so the teaching of their cultural background knowledge should be strengthened, and they should be guided to understand the reading material at a deeper level from the mastery of cultural background knowledge. In order to make sure that field independents can also use the guiding and organizing role of background knowledge graphs to integrate new information in reading materials and known information placed in long-term memory, and improve reading efficiency.

(2) Cultivate discourse comprehension and passage memorization skills. Field independents often adopt a "top-down" cognitive approach in the reading process, that is, the order of letters-words-phrases-passages, so some high school students often have the experience that for reading materials, they seem to understand every word and sentence, but can not completely summarize the structure of the whole text, especially cannot complete the whole text or reasoning problems of the author's writing intention. According to Gernsbacher's theory of structure building, chapter memory is both a consequence and a condition of chapter understanding. Therefore, in order to improve this situation for these students with strong independence, teachers should train and strengthen students' ability to build propositional

networks and scenario models in the passage, so that these students can consciously pay attention to the relationship between the propositions in the passage or the scenarios described in the imaginary passage. It also promotes students' ability to consider and understand deeply during the reading process by having them write abstracts, identify key points and draw structural diagrams.

5.3. Use Teaching Strategies to Balance Individual Field Independence and Field Dependence

Any individual's cognitive style is not absolute, but a specific cognitive style will dominate the individual's cognitive activity, so in the choice of reading strategies and methods, field independents and field dependents are significantly different. This requires teachers to adopt matching reading strategies that promote on the one hand, such as giving more free and independent space for independent people to think and explore for themselves, and allowing field dependents to read more articles about humanistic background knowledge. On the other hand, it is also necessary to adopt mismatched reading strategies to compensate for the role, such as analytical teaching for field-dependent students, encouraging their independent learning, and conducting group teaching, holistic teaching, and open teaching for field-independent students.

6. Conclusion

A clear model of thematic progression can help students improve the effect of Continuation Task. This study focuses on students' Continuation Task problems of disconnected plot, disconnected logic, disconnected coherence and articulation, etc., and takes three narratives in PEP Senior as examples to analyze the thematic progression in the narrative essay. Taking the test question Continuation Task in the New Curriculum II Paper 2022 as an example, the study discussed the theme and thematic progression mode of narrative text in Continuation Task, analyzed the text topic and clues for continuation, also proposed a pre-reading "Six Elements + Four Grammars", strategies for Continuation Task, and requirements for assessment. However, more narrative texts and Continuation Task need to be analyzed to promote the integration of thematic progression and Continuation Task, in terms of coherence and articulation and to provide an opportunity for thematic progression. In addition, further integration of the pedagogical assessment of reading followed by writing provides a direction for future research.

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