



Impact of Gender Differences on English Learning in China

Mainly Focus on Male and Female

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Abstract. This study mainly focuses on the study and expansion of the differences between male and female students in English learning in China. Influenced by different factors, male and female students will show different degrees of understanding and acceptance in English learning at different stages of life. Many researchers believe that as psychological changes occur at different stages of education, for example as boys become more mature in character, they will become more receptive to what is learned in school and will become more respectful of educators and knowledge. On the contrary, most girls who are generally quieter in primary schools will be more capable of learning, and they have a stronger foundation for English learning. Therefore, many researchers believe that girls in early education will show better learning ability and attitude. Understanding the effects of these gender differences could help contemporary educators develop new approaches and expand new ways of thinking about teaching English.

Keywords: Boys · Girls · English learning · Learning strategies differences · Sex-based education strategies

1 Introduction

English, as one of the essential subjects in the popularization of quality education, is not only a language subject but also has an irreplaceable role in the education of our country. With the development of society and the progress of the times, the study of the subject of English has placed higher demands on students. Therefore, the question of how to master the subject of English better is currently being explored by all educational researchers [1].

Many scholars have researched based on age and cognitive level of English learning [1], but few have analyzed gender differences. The gender factor is a non-negligible issue in English learning [2–5]. The scholars concerned conducted statistics on the English Language Proficiency Test (ELT) [1] scores of junior secondary school students as early as 2010. They found that the level of English Language Proficiency Test scores of girls at the junior secondary school level was, higher than that of boys. Similarly, relevant scholars analyzed the results of a local college entrance examination in 2016. They found that the proportion of top female achievers in Arts would also be slightly higher than

that of male students. This series of surveys also confirm that there is an impact on the level of mastery of English by students of different genders.

In terms of the sensitivity of boys' and girls' minds, each stage exhibits different characteristics. At the primary level, girls' minds develop earlier than boys, and their personalities are in terms of the sensitivity of boys' and girls' minds, each stage exhibits different characteristics. At the primary level, girls' minds develop earlier than boys, and their personalities are quieter than boys', preferring to think quietly, while boys' minds are not fully developed at this stage, also like stimulating, active activities, factors that lead to girls' overall more extraordinary learning ability at the primary level. In junior secondary school, girls' agility begins to differ from that of boys, and they begin to have difficulty understanding in-depth logical problems. In contrast, boys' agility increases, and their personalities become more mature and stable, making their learning abilities in a junior secondary school comparable. At the senior secondary level, boys' mental agility matures, and their reaction time and depth exceed that of girls. Still, girls also have a solid foundation and are more committed to their studies. This also determines that boys are the fastest learners in high school, while girls are the ones who make the most progress, with the gap between the two and possibly even reversing.

In general, it is believed that in terms of boys' and girls' thinking, boys are more sensitive to abstract data principles. In contrast, girls are more susceptible to perceptual textual grammar [6]. This is an essential factor in the differences in English learning between boys and girls. Overall, boys pay more attention than girls to develop logic and logical reasoning skills, especially in terms of language knowledge and sense of speech [7]. At the same time, they are relatively weaker in terms of vocabulary building and oral expression skills. Then boys', preferring to think quietly, while boys' minds are not fully developed at this stage and also choose stimulating, active activities, factors that lead to girls' overall more excellent learning ability at the primary level. In junior secondary school, girls' agility begins to differ from that of boys, and they begin to have difficulty understanding in-depth logical problems.

In contrast, boys' agility begins to grow, and their personalities become more mature and stable, making their learning abilities in a junior secondary school comparable [8]. At the senior secondary level, boys' mental agility matures, and their reaction time and depth exceed that of girls. Still, girls also have a solid foundation and are more committed to their studies. This also determines that boys are the fastest learners in high school, while girls are the ones who make the most progress, with the gap between the two narrowing and possibly even reversing.

At the same time, English is a language that requires a lot of practice and accumulation. Therefore, our analysis shows that if we want to be proficient in English, we must first acquire a lot of vocabulary. If students do not have a large vocabulary to build on, they will not be able to develop proficient listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in practice and, therefore, will not achieve high enough grades in English. However, many junior high school students face many difficulties in learning English vocabulary, such as not being able to remember words, not applying them, not being able to recite them, and so on. Yet many boys are reluctant to memorize words in their studies or are not careful enough in their recitation to understand the meaning of the vocabulary. As

a result, they lose interest in English and cannot catch up to the level of their female classmates in terms of achievement.

However, these results are not set in stone, and as boys grow older and more mature in their thinking, the last data changes as they enter the senior secondary stage [9]. Most boys at this stage have developed a sense of self-directed learning, have developed regular study habits and thinking patterns, and are willing to spend time and effort in learning English. Although boys' foundation at this stage is not as strong as that of girls, and some still have difficulty memorizing words, their thinking and logic are more mature and flexible than that of girls. They tend to show a strong interest and desire to learn new things, such as reading comprehension questions. This is explained why boys during this period generally like to try new and exciting things to have fun, which also improves their academic performance and provides a good foundation for future success.

Based on the above discussion, different scholars have held different, and in some cases contradictory, views on the impact of gender differences on English language learning [10]. Because of this, this paper will examine how gender factors affect English language learning by looking at the factors that have been identified as influencing English language learning. This paper will analyze several aspects.

Foreign language learning is a very complicated process. It needs to start from the basic letters, phonetic symbols, word recognition and so on is a long-term cognitive process. Therefore, listening, speaking, reading and writing all play an important role in foreign language learning. Let's analyze the differences between male and female students in foreign language learning from these aspects.

Differences in basic phonetic knowledge

People generally learn a skill from imitation, foreign language learning is no exception. In the process of imitation, the average girl.

The ability of imitation is stronger than that of boys, and the speed of learning and pronunciation is relatively accurate. Girls are also better than boys in phonetic reading. In the aspect of grammar learning, boys are better than girls in grammar analysis because they use comprehension and memorization, so they can master more grammar content.

Generally, girls are more likely to identify the pronunciation that is easy to confuse, and the recognition accuracy is significantly higher than boys. For the content that needs to be understood and analyzed, boys generally score higher in reasoning than girls in listening tests because their logical reasoning ability is higher than girls. In the middle and later stages of language learning, when listening tests gradually shift from focusing on the ability to capture language information to focusing on the analysis and understanding of the acquired language information, the listening level of male students keeps approaching that of female students.

Reading comprehension

Generally, in the accumulation of vocabulary girls than boys, but boys are better than girls in terms of logical thinking ability, thus in the primary stage of English learning, mainly

study the vocabulary, were generally higher than boys, and analyzed the comprehensive ability is becoming more and more value in later, the boy's reading comprehension ability is higher and higher.

Writing

In the early stage of foreign language learning, the articles are mainly descriptive and narrative, and women are good at detailed description and in-depth depiction of the objects to be described, so their written language works tend to be delicate. In the later period of foreign language learning, argumentative discourse is the main type of written expression, and the characteristic of male's good at abstract thinking is given full play at this time, and the outstanding political articles in class are often written by male students.

2 Physiology Differences

There are many researchers who found differences in the structure and function of the brain between men and women. In most cases and most aspects of development, the brains of girls mature earlier than those of boys. In infants, brain development is often seen in the right hemisphere, with a gradual shift to the left hemisphere. This shift to the left begins earlier in females than in males. Psychological studies show that the human brain is divided into two hemispheres: the left and the right [11]. There is a clear division of labor between the left and right hemispheres of the brain, with each having its role. The left hemisphere of the normal human brain is responsible for verbal and abstract thinking and is therefore also called the verbal dominant hemisphere. The right hemisphere of the brain is responsible for figurative intuition, imaginative thinking, and the regulation of emotions, and is often referred to as the non-verbal dominant hemisphere. The left hemisphere of the brain is verbally dominant, but it cannot be said that the right hemisphere is not functional. Under certain conditions, the two hemispheres compensate for each other's functions. According to research, speech is 70% in the left hemisphere and 15% in the right. In general, the left hemisphere is the main center of language and is the dominant hemisphere for speech. As the left hemisphere, which controls the processing of verbal information, becomes specialized much earlier in females than in males before puberty, the left hemisphere becomes more specialized than the right hemisphere in females around the age of six, whereas in males the left hemisphere does not become specialized until adolescence. Based on the research, girls as young as three or four years old spend almost a quarter of their day interacting with others through verbal speech, so fluency in the verbal language is evident before puberty. After adolescence, and especially in young adulthood, this feature becomes more pronounced as a result of increased verbal practice, while in men it is slightly less pronounced.

In terms of gender differences in memory, Tan Dingliang (1995) argues that girls have higher absolute perceptual sensitivity and a clearer and more accurate image of what they have perceived. Therefore, it can be argued that girls have better situational memory than boys. Boys are more able than girls to think at a higher level of abstraction based on the second signal, the abstract signal of reality, for example, language and words, and the

logic of speech are more obvious. Therefore, we can say that the linguistic differences between the sexes are due to innate factors and are inevitably linked to the development of the individual and even of society.

2.1 Psychology Differences

In terms of differences in interests, boys have a wider range of interests and their curiosity is easily expressed in all aspects, but it does not last long; girls' interests are easily limited to certain aspects related to the activities they are engaged in and to the environment they live in, but once they have developed a strong interest, they can maintain it for a longer period and appear to be more stable [12]. Learning a foreign language is a long-term, cumulative process that requires three things to be repeated every day—reading aloud, reading, and listening—and these need to be done consistently over a long period is difficult for boys to do well. And once these things are done for a long time, they can seem tedious and cannot retain boys' interest for a long time.

In terms of personality differences, boys have obvious independence, decisiveness, and flexibility, but are prone to presumption, wild impulsiveness, carelessness, and sloppiness; girls have a more obvious tendency towards emotional or rational-emotional personality traits, with a preference for submissiveness and introversion.

From the point of view of the will factor, the will is a mental process that is expressed in actions linked to overcoming difficulties to achieve a goal, and the quality of a strong will is to be self-aware, persistent, and self-controlled. Influenced by traditional Chinese culture, girls often play around their parents when they are young and are taught to be good, not to run around, to learn to run the household, to do things one by one, and to insist on finishing something, so girls have a higher level of persistence and self-awareness. Boys are taught that “good boys are ambitious”, they often play outside and play exciting and adventurous games, and are less disciplined by their parents.

2.2 Learning Strategies Differences

In terms of language construction strategies, women are more receptive to functional practice strategies. Women prefer to use a large number of conversations, listening, writing, and reading aloud to build their English language [6]. Most men were not interested in this monotonous and tedious approach. In addition, women are better at organizing their learning activities in the process of language construction. They are more active in adopting language-appropriate learning methods and repeatedly practicing what they consider to be imperfect components of language, which contribute to the effectiveness of language construction. In contrast, males are somewhat inferior in these areas [13]. Most males tend to think abstractly and are more inclined to memorize knowledge by comprehension and less inclined to memorize mechanically [14]. In the case of English as a language, many knowledge and language points must be mechanically memorized over a long period to achieve the accumulation of language knowledge that will produce results. In their approach to learning, they always want to rush through the process, actively learning for a while when their heart is in the right place, and then not learning anything once the heat wears off. They are not willing to remember more and take the time to accumulate [7]. Unlike most girls who have a planned, step-by-step schedule of

memorization and training to achieve knowledge accumulation. With this difference in learning strategies, men tend to be less effective than women in building language.

Because boys and girls of different genders in primary, middle, and high school have other performance characteristics in English, English teachers at various levels need to tailor their teaching to the needs and interests of their male and female students [15–18]. However, there is currently little analysis of gender-specific factors in English language learning. It isn't easy to provide a template for English language teachers to improve their teaching programs. In this paper, we analyze the gender differences in English language learning and provide a detailed analysis of the factors and differences at each stage of primary, secondary, and high school to provide a reference for future English language learners and English language teaching researchers.

2.3 Sex-Based Education Strategies Difference

According to the gender differences in psychology and intelligence between boys and girls, researchers explore the reasons why girls learn English better than boys. One of the basic principles of education is to teach students in accordance with their aptitude according to their actual situation. In English teaching practice, how to implement “sex-specific teaching” in view of this gender difference? The basic strategy of sex-based teaching is to make full use of the strengths and avoid the weaknesses, so as to promote the English learning of boys and girls to go hand in hand. In the sex-based teaching of English teaching, teachers should first abandon the concept that girls are better at English than boys, face up to the psychological and intellectual defects of boys and girls in English learning, and constantly encourage boys to learn better than girls. When implementing this strategy, boys with great language talent and excellent English learning can be selected from the class as examples for English learning, so as to encourage other boys to learn English well. This point can be summed up as “correct attitude learning”.

Secondly, in terms of teaching methods, English teachers adopt scientific teaching methods to impart knowledge according to the different psychological and intellectual characteristics of boys and girls, so as to promote the development and exertion of their respective advantages so as to enhance their strengths and avoid weaknesses. For the deficiency of boys' visual thinking and speech ability, teachers should strengthen the visualization, intuition and interest of English teaching, and use a variety of teaching methods to “do what they like”, such as watching English slides, English story films, playing games and so on. This can not only enrich boys' direct sensory experience and knowledge of English, cultivate their interest in learning, but also promote the development of other related subjects by improving their image thinking ability.

Thirdly, teachers should constantly implement the teaching policy of encouragement, guidance and tracking in the process of teaching boys. In classroom teaching, teachers should pay more attention to the performance of boys, create equal performance opportunities for boys, and set up learning files for some boys who are poor in English learning to keep abreast of their learning situation. Whenever some boys make progress after their efforts, teachers should give praise or reward in time to encourage them to continue their efforts.

3 Conclusion

This study analyzes the factors that affect the differences between men and women in learning English. The first factor is the physiological difference; in most situations and aspects of development, girls' brains mature earlier than boys' brains. The second factor is psychological differences, from the three factors of interest, personality, and will, explain the differences between men and women. In terms of interest differences, boys have a wider range of interests, and their curiosity is easy to express in various aspects, but it is not can last too long; girls' interests can easily be limited to certain aspects related to the activities they do and the environment they live in, but once they develop a strong interest, they can stay longer and watch more stable. In terms of personality differences, boys have obvious independence, decisiveness and flexibility, but are prone to presumption, megalomania, carelessness, and sloppy; girls have more obvious tendency to emotional or rational-emotional personality traits, preferring submissive and introverted. In terms of will, under the influence of traditional Chinese culture, girls often play with their parents when they are young. They are taught to be good, not to run around, to learn how to run the house, to do things one by one, and to insist on completing certain things, so girls have more High levels of persistence and self-awareness. Boys are taught that "good boys are ambitious", they play outside more often, play exciting and adventurous games, and are less disciplined by their parents.

The third factor is the difference in learning strategies. In terms of language construction strategies, women are more likely to accept functional practice strategies. Most men tend to think abstractly, and are more inclined to memorize knowledge through understanding, and less inclined to memorize mechanically. Finally, it discusses how to formulate strategies based on gender differences in English teaching. English teachers adopt scientific teaching methods to impart knowledge according to the different psychological and intellectual characteristics of male and female students, and promote the development and exertion of their respective advantages, thereby enhancing advantages and avoiding disadvantages. Teachers should constantly implement the teaching policy of encouragement, guidance and tracking in the process of boys' education. Finally, it is expected to improve the differences between men and women in English learning.

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