

The study of the influence of linear thinking on the study of English writing

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Abstract

This study try to explore the difference between the English writing of middle school students under the linear thinking and the English writing of the Chinese under the spiral thinking. which will provide a new way of thinking with students and teachers in the process of teaching. Through the analysis of the literature and the selection of a class as the research object in a middle school in Nanchong, the author collected a series of relevant data through the research methods such as content analysis of their composition to obtain the final conclusion. Under the linear thinking, the students' learning in English should be more consistent with the English expression habit and the learning efficiency is higher.

Key words: linear thinking; English learning; English writing

I. Introduction

In the daily English examination, writing has always been the key part of the investigation, accounting for 25% of the total score. However, after more than 20 years of English learning, students will still produce a large number of Chinglish phenomena in the process of writing, as well as misuse in the vocabulary section, confusion of sentence structure and unclear meaning of sentence patterns. Usually, teachers will analyze the mistakes made by students in their compositions from the aspects of words, grammar and so on, but they can not be separated from the guidance of thinking mode. In the process of English learning, students usually use their mother tongue to help them understand the newly learned knowledge or their own difficult knowledge, which requires us to dialectically think the role of mother tongue in the process of English learning. A large number of transfer theories have also studied the role of mother tongue in the process of foreign language learning. However, in the process of using their mother tongue to support their English learning, the essence is to help them understand some of the English knowledge by using the thinking patterns they are used in Chinese.

The similarities and differences between English thinking and Chinese thinking are not formed overnight. Due to the similarities and differences of cultural background, geographical environment and economic development between the two places, Chinese thinking is different from western thinking, and thinking is inextricably related to language. Language is the external form of thinking, and thinking is the indicator of language. Under different modes of thinking, language naturally has differences, so for native Chinese learners, in the process of learning a foreign language, it is inevitable that they will encounter understanding difficulties, and it is easier to understand the knowledge points which are similar to their mother tongue, such as the simplest sentence structure: subject-verb-object structure, students can quickly understand this knowledge point. For the more complex sentence structure and the knowledge which is different from Chinese thinking, the students need to learn and repeat continuously in order to master it. , if the knowledge is not used for a long time, may even appear the phenomenon of forgetting.

II. Linear Thinking Mode and Spiral Thinking Mode

Chinese prefer to put forward their own themes euphemistically in their daily communication. For example, in the process of daily phone calls, the Chinese will not immediately put forward their topic center, but choose to talk about something else first, and then slowly lead the hear listener into topic. The Chinese commonly used "although.....but, because.....so." in grammatical structure. We can figure out that Chinese usually put their point on the rear part of a sentence. (Zhang Yuejian, the influence on English writing under the differences between Chinese and Western thinking, the Journal of Jishou University, Social Science Edition, March 2006.) which reflects the spiral principle of Chinese people in thinking pattern.

For westerners, the most prominent linear thinking which corresponds to the fact is that they won't get caught up with length explanations on the phone, just go straight to the subject and hang up after communicating with the listener, and they won't feel embarrassed or need more pleasantries. In addition, in the process of talking to people, if it is necessary for Westerners to point out each other's mistakes,

they will also point out calmly and directly, which not only makes the hearer understand his own shortcomings but also does not undermine the self-esteem of the hearer, which contrasts with the Chinese people's "difficult to point out". This is only a small manifestation of Westerners' linear thinking.

III. The Embodiment of Linear Thinking in English Writing

For English writing, we can analyze from three aspects: words, sentences and structures. The word is a relatively independent language component, in the English study, its existence does not act as the raw material of our analysis, and it needs to be included in the sentence, and the word has its own character meaning, so, This paper discusses the influence of linear thinking in English writing from two aspects: the sentence structure and the text.

1. The Influence of Linear Thinking on the Sentence Pattern of English Writing

The linear thinking of the west is different from that of the Chinese, and the Chinese used to putting the emphasis or theme of the sentence at the end of the sentence, and put the modified word in the front of the sentence, for example: The them of the "Due to the cold weather, the students have a cold." is that the students have a cold, and the subject is the students, both in the rear half of the sentence. When it is translated into English, the expression will be "Students have caught a cold because of the bad weather." the them of the sentence: the students have a cold and the subject of the sentence: the students are located in the first half of the sentence, and the direct roll-call theme will set forth the content related to the subject matter, which is consistent with the Chinese people's expression of their own meaning. another example: "an interesting thing", through this simple sentence structure, it can be seen that the Chinese language is the postposition of the subject word, the modified word is located in front of the subject word, and it is more obvious in more complex sentence. It is not difficult to find that in Chinese, we needs to read the whole sentence or large half of the sentence to find the keyword of the sentence or the subject. In English, "an interesting thing "is usually expressed as "something interesting", the "something "of the sentence is located in the first half of the sentence structure, and the " interesting "is located in the rear half of the sentence structure.

In addition, there is also a way to start the topic sentence in the sentence pattern, taking Nan Chong high school analog volume as an example, it asks the students to introduce a hotel to a friend who is about to come to China and to explain why the hotel is to be selected. In the composition, there is a large number of examples of Chinese thinking, some students write in this way: "But my home is full, so you should go to live in the hotel, you don't be worry, because I'm already to choose a hotel." first, the beginning of the sentence is a typical Chinese thinking, under Chinese thinking pattern, it needs to be euphemistic to refuse friends to live own house, not in a straightforward way to explain, and the sentence use the word "but" at the beginning the to make it clear that the room is full. In fact, it is not necessary to do this kind of explanation in the English composition. Second, there is also a typical Chinese thought in the connection word part. The whole sentence gives a feeling of translating Chinese word by word into English, and does not take into account the writing rules of the English sentence. for

example, in the expression of the "But my room is full, so you need to go to the hotel", in Chinese, Such expression doesn't seem to be wrong, but it translate into English in a wrong way, "but" and "so" can not be used in one sentence. What's more, the use of the verb in this sentence also shows that the students do not take into account the differences between the way of Chinese thinking and English thinking during the process of English learning. In the course of writing, it is only a simple way of thinking in Chinese, and then it is also translated into English in a simple way. such as the last sentence "I have chosen a hotel for you", in Chinese, the word "already" reflects the whole event in the past, it does not need to make any change in the "choose" of the verb, but in English, there is a change in the tense of the verb, which makes the students feel a little difficult in the process of learning the English verb tense and leads students to choose the most common and the most easily-known verb "am", rather than the correct verb "have" in the expression of the word "already". Finally, under the Chinese thinking, the composition of the sentence is also incomplete. such as the last sentence, "I have chosen the hotel ",it should be "I have chosen the hotel for you", so the correct text of the sentence should be "I have already chosen a hotel for you ".

To sum up, in the course of English writing, there are a lot of things that we need to think and improve in sentence patterns, which requires the students to understand the differences between the western and Chinese thinking. we need pay attention to the formation of the sentence under the west thinking pattern consciously adjust our own language, and avoid or reduce the phenomenon of Chinese-style English.

2. The Influence of Linear Thinking on the Structure of English Writing

In the aspect of passage, it is not difficult to find that the articles under Chinese thinking usually render the background knowledge around the topics and even demonstrate them from the side and the opposite, but they will not make a positive argument at the beginning or the first half of the article and put forward the theme directly. Under the guidance of linear thinking, the English passage will clarify the theme at the beginning, then put the argument related to the theme gradually, distinctly and clearly. unlike the Chinese spiral thinking, maybe a large part of the roundabout exposition and the sentence does not even have the subject, which cause it may be difficult to understand the meaning of the sentence when understanding the Chinese text under the straight-linear thinking. Taking a simple English composition entitled "my hometown" as an example, the author compares the differences between English model articles and student' model.

English model text:

My hometown is very beautiful. The climate here is neither too hot or too cold. There are many green trees and beautiful flowers all the year round.

In recent years, the economy of my hometown has been developing fast. It has taken on a new look with high buildings, wide roads and better surroundings. People's life improves quickly. More and more people have moved into new buildings and many even have cars of their own.

I hope people in my hometown will work even harder to make my hometown more beautiful. My hometown can have a bright future.

Through this 106-word composition, we can find that the discourse logic under the English straight-linear thinking mode is very clear and the center of each paragraph will be put forward directly at the beginning. For example, the opening: “my hometown is very beautiful.” of the first paragraph lead the whole paragraph even the whole text, continuing to explore what aspects of beauty, introducing the weather and trees and flowers and developing the full text around this sentence. The first sentence of the second paragraph puts forward that “the economic development of my hometown has been very good in recent years,” then in the second paragraph, it introduces in detail the good economic development of my hometown, that is “high-rise buildings, wide roads and good environment, people’s living standards are improving day by day,” and the meaning of sentences is very clear . According to this paper, we can find that linear thinking can provide learners with strict logical thinking and clear writing point of view, which makes the writing more fluent, the point of view clearer, the structure of the article clearer, and it is easier for readers to understand the author’s point of view.

IV. Implications for English Teaching under Straight-linear Thinking.

1. To incorporate the Contrast between Chinese and Western Cultures into the Daily Teaching.

Teachers should not only transmit simple words or grammar knowledge, but also teach students the corresponding background cultural knowledge to make students understand more about western culture, so that students can have a comparison with Chinese culture. Students’ long-term cultural acceptance and cultural reference should also be taught. In the process of cultural appreciation, we can realize more where the differences between Chinese and Western cultures lie. When students have such a consciousness, they will consciously adjust their own language learning methods and the focus of language learning in the daily learning process, consciously distinguish what they have learned and what they need to pay attention to compared with Chinese thinking. In this way, in the process of long-term training, Students will master the common ideas and learning points of English learning.

3. Training of Students’ Sense of Language through a Large Number of Reading.

For language learning, the sense of language is important. A good sense of language can help students to reduce a lot of burden in the course of English learning and can clearly feel that the learning process can be much easier than the students with poor sense of language. In the students’ daily study activity, the reading not only can increase a certain vocabulary, but also can learn some new sentence patterns, and also can find the expression and characteristics of the English language under the English straight-linear thinking in a large number of reading processes, If students can read and recite aloud, it will be a great progress to the sense of language for the students, and by reciting, the students can experience that even sentences of the same meaning and expressions in Chinese and in English are different, the positions of the sentence component are also different, and it will also give students a lot of thought in the word selection. In addition, the improvement of reading will also have great progress for the students’ translation skills, and the skills of the composition will naturally be improved.

4. Carry out Cultural Exchange Activities

In addition to teaching knowledge in the classroom, we can also carry out cultural exchange activities after class. In the process of communication, students can synthesize the cultural differences they know and form a cultural circle, so that each student can master the cultural knowledge that he or she did not master before, and, Students can learn more about western culture in the process of long-time accumulation and avoid making cultural mistakes when they use English on a daily basis. For example, in China, red is a symbol of festive and warm. In big festivals such as the New year, Chinese people like red and feel that it can bring good luck and symbolize vigor and vitality. In the West, red is a symbol of blood and cruelty. Therefore, it is particularly important for students to understand certain cultural background knowledge, especially for English majors.

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