

Research and Limitations on Second Language Multi Text Reading Comprehension

Yuehua Han

Liaocheng University, Liaocheng City, Shandong Province, 252000

Abstract: This article explores the importance and challenges of multi text reading comprehension in second language learning in the context of globalization. Multi text reading comprehension requires readers to possess skills such as information integration, reasoning, and discrimination, which are significantly related to knowledge validation beliefs. The study analyzed the impact of cognitive beliefs, reading strategies, prior knowledge, and emotional investment on multi text reading comprehension, and proposed strategies to enhance second language multi text reading comprehension. Finally, this article points out the limitations of current research and proposes future research directions.

Keywords: Second language learning; Multi text reading comprehension; Information integration

1. Introduction

In the context of globalization, the importance of language communication has become increasingly prominent, and reading, as a widely used means of communication, is also playing an increasingly important role in academic research. Previous research has mostly focused on reading a single text, but in today's rapidly developing information age, single text reading is no longer sufficient to meet the demand, especially in second language reading.

In multi text reading comprehension, skills such as information integration, reasoning, and discrimination are particularly important, and knowledge verification beliefs are also significantly related to multi text reading comprehension. This article aims to explore the influencing factors of multi text reading comprehension, with a focus on analyzing the effects and internal processes under different knowledge verification beliefs and reading strategies, and studying students' strategy use in second language multi text reading, in order to provide new perspectives and empirical support for research on second language multi text reading comprehension.

2. Definition and Challenges of Multi Text Reading Comprehension

Wineburg (1991) pointed out that multi text reading comprehension refers to the process in which readers understand and solve complex topics or problems through texts from multiple different sources. Compared to single text reading, the core challenge of understanding multi text reading lies in the complexity and diversity of information.

The key skills for multi text reading comprehension include information recognition and selection, information integration, critical evaluation, and reasoning and analysis. Readers need to effectively identify and select key information from relevant texts, compare and contrast information from different texts, identify their associations and differences, and form a coherent overall understanding based on this. At the same time, readers need to critically evaluate the sources, author backgrounds, reliability of information, and credibility of evidence of different texts, using logical reasoning and critical thinking to ensure that the formed viewpoints are reasonable and well founded.

3. The influencing factors of multi text reading comprehension

3.1 Cognitive beliefs

Epistemological beliefs refer to an individual's views on the essence of knowledge and the ways in which it is acquired. These beliefs have a significant impact on multi text reading comprehension as they determine how readers process and evaluate information. In the context of multi text reading, readers need to integrate conflicting information from different sources, therefore, mature epistemological beliefs are particularly crucial. Mature epistemological beliefs help readers better integrate conflicting information from different sources, thereby forming a coherent understanding. Enable readers to maintain an open and flexible way of thinking, constantly adjusting and improving their understanding when faced with complex and contradictory information.

Bråten and Strøm (2006) found that students with higher levels of epistemological beliefs performed better in multi text reading tasks because they were able to integrate and evaluate information from different texts more effectively^[2]. Similarly, the study by Kendeau et

al. (2016) also suggests that readers with high levels of cognitive beliefs exhibit higher comprehension and knowledge transfer abilities when dealing with multiple textual information^[3].

3.2 Reading strategy

Effective reading strategies can help readers better process, integrate, and evaluate information from different sources, thereby improving their understanding of complex issues and topics. By combining intensive reading with skimming, readers can improve the efficiency of information processing. By comparing and contrasting, readers can identify similarities and differences between viewpoints and evidence in different texts, thus forming a comprehensive understanding. Taking notes and annotating key information during the reading process can help readers better organize and remember information, and these records can serve as references for subsequent integration and evaluation of information. Questioning and reflection are also important strategies. By constantly asking questions and reflecting on the information read, such as whether the author's viewpoint is supported by sufficient evidence and why viewpoints conflict between different texts, readers can deepen their understanding and critical thinking.

Research has shown that readers who use effective reading strategies perform better in multi text reading comprehension. Wineburg's (1991) study found that historians pay special attention to the source information of multiple historical texts when reading them, conduct systematic comparisons and analyses, and thus form a coherent historical narrative. Wolfe and Goldman's (2005) study suggests that readers who use elaborate processing strategies are better able to integrate and understand conflicting historical event descriptions^{[4][5]}.

3.3 Prior knowledge

Prior knowledge refers to the background information and experience that readers already possess before reading, which can significantly affect their ability to process, integrate, and understand new information. Readers with rich prior knowledge can quickly identify relevant information when reading multiple texts, connect new information with existing knowledge, and form a more coherent understanding. This not only helps improve reading efficiency, but also enhances deep processing and memory of information. Prior knowledge can help readers activate relevant background information during the reading process and connect new information with existing knowledge. In this way, readers can understand the main content and core points of the text more quickly. For complex and specialized topics, prior knowledge is particularly important as it can help readers better understand the terms, concepts, and theories in the text.

Mohammad Nabi Karimi's (2014) study found that prior knowledge can significantly affect readers' performance in second language multi text reading comprehension^[6]. Specifically, readers with rich prior knowledge can more effectively identify key information, make reasonable inferences and analyses, and form deeper understanding and more accurate judgments when processing and integrating multiple textual information.

3.4 Emotional investment

Emotional engagement refers to the interest, motivation, and emotional response exhibited by readers during the reading process. Emotional investment can enhance readers' focus and persistence. When readers develop a strong interest in reading materials, they are more likely to invest more time and effort in understanding the content of the text. Emotional investment enables readers to maintain a high level of reading motivation and not easily give up when facing difficult and complex multi text information. This sustained focus is particularly important for integrating and evaluating information from different sources. High levels of emotional engagement make readers more willing to engage in critical thinking and reflection. They not only pay attention to the surface information of the text, but also delve into the meaning behind the text, analyzing the relationships and conflicts between different viewpoints. Emotional engagement enables readers to have a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding when faced with conflicting multi textual information.

4. Strategies for second language multi text reading comprehension

In second language learning, reading is widely regarded as a key skill because learners often rely more on reading and writing abilities rather than verbal input. Although reading comprehension has been extensively studied in the field of second language education, there is relatively little research on second language multi text reading comprehension. Mohammad Nabi Karimi's research shows that both native language reading ability and reading strategies have a significant impact on second language single text reading. He found that reading strategies play a much greater role in second language multi text reading comprehension than in second language single text reading comprehension^[6]. In addition, Karimi's further research explored the influence of prior knowledge and second language proficiency on the frequency and type of strategies used by academic English readers in processing multi text reading comprehension. The results showed that these two factors have a significant impact on the frequency and type of strategies used by academic English readers in processing multi text reading comprehension^[6].

Based on these research results, the following are some strategies to improve second language multi text reading comprehension

4.1 Strengthen language foundation

Enhance vocabulary and grammar knowledge, and accumulate language foundation through extensive reading. A solid language foundation can help learners understand and process multi text information more smoothly.

4.2 Integrate multi text information

Practice integrating and comparing information from different sources, identifying conflicts and consistency in the information. Through this approach, learners can form a more comprehensive and coherent understanding, and make reasonable comprehensive judgments.

4.3 Utilize charts and concept maps

Charts and concept maps help visualize and organize complex information, helping learners to understand the relationships and overall structure between different texts more clearly.

4.4 Adopt diversified reading strategies

combining intensive reading and skimming. Intensive reading is used to carefully analyze important paragraphs and details, while skimming is used to quickly skim through the text to grasp the overall content and general idea. Through this approach, learners can gain a deep understanding of key details while quickly acquiring the main information.

5. Limitations of second language multi text reading comprehension

Although second language multi text reading comprehension is an important and valuable field of research, existing studies still have limitations in certain aspects. Firstly, the relatively small number of studies has led to insufficient guidance in both theory and practice. Many studies mainly focus on single text reading comprehension, with less attention paid to multi text reading comprehension, which limits our understanding of the specific strategies and difficulties that second language learners face when dealing with multi text information. Secondly, existing research often adopts static research methods such as questionnaire surveys and audio thinking records, lacking real-time monitoring of the dynamic reading process and unable to fully capture the complex cognitive activities of learners in actual reading. In addition, the research subjects are mostly students in academic environments, and the research results may not fully represent the reading comprehension of second language learners with different backgrounds and abilities. Finally, the inconsistency in methods and variable control among different studies limits the comparability and universality of research results. Future research needs to adopt more diverse and dynamic research methods, and expand the scope of research subjects to provide a more comprehensive and detailed picture of second language multi text reading comprehension.

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