



A Study On Cognitive Style And Communicative Ability In English Among Prospective Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this paper is to assess the cognitive style and communicative ability in English among prospective teachers. Sample of the study comprises of 300 Prospective Teachers in Chennai District. Normative survey method was adopted for data collection. Stratified Random sampling method was used to select the sample of the study. Cognitive Style Inventory developed and standardized by Dr. Praveen Kumar Jha (Madhipura 2001) was utilized. Another tool was adopted from English Language Competence Questionnaire developed by Edgar R Eslit;s (March 2023) is modified and standardized by the investigator. The 50 MCQ questions having five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree was used to collect data. Statistical analysis like 't' test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the data. Results revealed that there is significant relationship between cognitive style and communicative ability in English among prospective teachers. Also, it was found that there is significant difference between male prospective teachers and female prospective teachers in cognitive style and communicative ability in English. But there was no significant difference found in cognitive style and communicative ability in English among prospective teachers with respect to type of institution.

KEYWORDS: Cognitive Style, communicative ability in English, Prospective teachers,

INTRODUCTION

Cognitive style or thinking style is a concept used in cognitive psychology to describe the way individuals think, perceive and remember information. Cognitive style differs from cognitive ability (or level), the latter being measured by aptitude tests or so-called intelligence tests. There is controversy over the exact meaning of the term "cognitive style" and whether it is a single or multiple dimensions of human personality. However, it remains a key concept in the areas of education and management. If a pupil has a cognitive style that is similar to that of his/her teacher, the chances are improved that the pupil will have a more positive learning experience (Kirton, 2003). Likewise, team members with similar cognitive styles likely feel more positive about their participation with the team (Kirton, 2003). While matching cognitive styles may make participants feel more comfortable when working with one another, this alone cannot guarantee the success of the outcome.

Cognitive psychology is a rapidly advancing field of study. Linguistic theories assume that language is learnt differently as regards cognitive skills are concerned. However, language and linguistic processes are viewed as interacting with cognition but maintain a separate identity that justifies investigation independent from cognitive processes (e.g., Wong & Swain 1984). One of the principal cognitive processes that has not been addressed in these theories is learning strategies, or the "behaviours and thoughts that a learner engages in during learning that are intended to influence the learner's encoding process" (Weinstein & Mayer 1986, p. 315).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Ratheeswari (2023) studied the relation between cognitive style and problem-solving ability among high school students. 200 samples were tested with the help of Cognitive Style Inventory by Jha and Problem-

Solving ability Questionnaire by Dubey. Findings show that there is positive correlation between cognitive style problem solving ability. This implies that the schools may provide facilities to handle the problem by their own way.

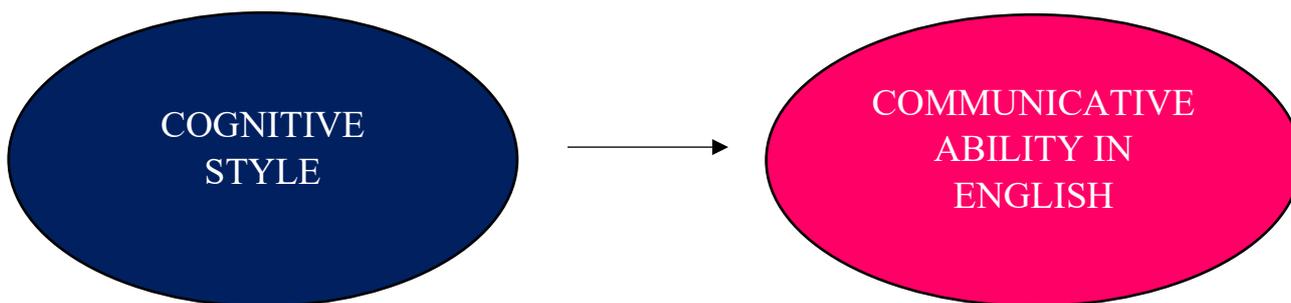
Fang Li and Mariano Bagasol (2023) examined the influence of cognitive style on self-regulated learning ability among 232 college students from colleges and universities in Hebei Province, China. It was found that a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.735, p < 0.01$) between cognitive style and self-regulated learning ability and implied that educators can utilize this knowledge to design instructional strategies that cater to individual cognitive styles, enhancing students' self-regulated learning.

Olagbaju (2020) heightened that English language is the international, official as well as the language of education at all stages from primary to higher education institutions. The same case was investigated in Nigeria where English is the dominating language as medium of instruction. Earlier it was found that English language and comprehension in Nigeria was very poor and had not capable of summary writing, which was identified as one of the dreaded aspects of the subject. This ongoing study was done to study the “cognitive styles and gender as predictors of students’ achievement in summary writing in selected secondary schools in Ibadan, Nigeria”. Cognitive style makes a person unique from others in way of thinking, remembering, understanding, analysing, synthesizing, comprehending, receiving information and to process and organize it, and decision making etc. Gender which is always considered as backbone in conducting research has the magic role in teaching learning process. The study had involved 350 participants of four senior secondary schools in Ibadan. The goal of the current study was to examine how well cognitive style and gender might predict students' success in summary writing by measuring its global and analytical dimensions. A statistical measure of regression analysis was employed to analyse the collected data. The results of the study depicted that cognitive style and gender are the predictors of students’ achievement in summary writing. The study recommends that cognitive style should be cared on before teaching and there should not have any mismatch between the teaching style of teachers and the learning style of learners. The study also suggests teachers that positive mind set up should be built in the learners and teaching should be according to their cognitive power. The study also laid emphasis that gender should be taken into consideration in teaching learning process because it has been found that gender has a great contribution in students’ achievement and attitude.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Cognitive style is a hypothetical construction that has been developed to explain the process of mediation between stimuli and response. There are different kinds of cognitive styles like narrow and extensive scanners, psychological differentiation, tolerance / intolerance for ambiguity, field dependence and independence for ambiguity, cognitive consistency, and locus of control. According to Educationists, Cognitive style was defined as the potential individual differences that may be used by the teachers to enhance students learning.

English Language Learning is given more importance because it is one of the common International Language. Apart from academic English, learning English Language skills help prospective teachers to get a better job, improve the communication skills, understand other cultures, travel easily and improves the English language.



STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of the study can be stated as “**A Study on Cognitive Style and Communicative Ability in English among Prospective Teachers**”.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES

Cognitive ability: It refers to the cognitive psychology paradigm, new information is acquired through a four-stage encoding process involving selection, acquisition, construction, and integration. – (Weinstein & Mayer 1986)

Communicative ability in English: In this study, it refers to “The foundation of language learning is laid on the four fundamental skills namely, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Speech is the ground work and all the rest are built up from it”. – (Saraswathi 2001)

Prospective Teachers: The student teachers who are pursuing Bachelor of Education course are called as prospective teachers.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following hypotheses are formulated for the present investigation:

- There is significant relationship between cognitive style and communicative ability in English among prospective teachers.
- There is no significant difference between male and female prospective teachers in cognitive style and communicative ability in English.
- There is no significant difference in cognitive style and communicative ability in English among Prospective Teachers with respect to type of institution.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Normative Survey research method is used to attain the objectives of the current study. The present study consists of 300 prospective teachers pursuing Bachelor of Education programme in Chennai District, Tamil Nadu in India.

TOOLS USED

The following tools were utilized for the present study.

1. Cognitive Style Inventory was developed and standardized by Dr. Praveen Kumar Jha (Madhipura 2001). The inventory consists of 40 multiple choice questions.
2. English Language Competence Questionnaire developed by Edgar R Eslit was adapted and modified by the investigator and pilot study was conducted using it. The 50 MCQ questions having five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. For a positive statement, the scores were assigned 5,4,3,2 and 1 and for negative statements the scores were reversed.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data collected from students (N=300) using various tools were tabulated and subjected to statistical analysis by applying appropriate statistical techniques. The following major statistical techniques were used for data analysis.

- T-test
- ANOVA and
- Pearson Product Moment Correlation

Hypothesis 1: There is significant relationship between cognitive style and communicative ability in English among prospective teachers.

Table 1 Showing Pearson's Product Moment correlation co-efficient between Cognitive Style and Communicative Ability in English among prospective teachers

Variables	Cognitive Style	Communicative Ability in English
Cognitive Style	1	0.685**
Communicative Ability in English	x	1

Note: **Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

From the above table value, it is inferred that there is significant and positive relationship between cognitive style and communicative ability in English among prospective teachers and is significant at 0.01 level.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between male and female prospective teachers in cognitive style and communicative ability in English.

Table 2 Significance of mean difference between male and female prospective teachers in Cognitive Style and Communicative Ability in English

Variables	Gender				t value	P value
	Male (N=98)		Female (N=202)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Cognitive Style	154.62	14.434	155.04	16.820	0.213	0.831 ^{NS}
Communicative Ability in English	168.47	31.711	149.70	40.844	8.363	0.001**

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Note: ** Significant at 0.01 level

It could be inferred from the above table values that there is significant difference between male and female prospective teachers in communicative ability in English language, which is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the formulated hypothesis is that there will be no significant difference between male and female prospective teachers in communicative ability in English language is rejected. From the mean scores, it is observed that in communicative ability in English, male prospective teachers speak English fluently and their performance is high when compared to female prospective teachers. This may be due to the fact that male prospective teachers are better in English communication skills and they put more hard work to speak English language professionally compared to female prospective teachers.

But there is no significant difference found in cognitive style which shows that both male and female prospective teachers are similar in cognitive style. Therefore, the framed hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in cognitive style and communicative ability in English among Prospective Teachers with respect to type of institution.

Table 3 Significance of mean difference among prospective teachers in Cognitive Style and Communicative Ability in English based on type of institution

Variables	Type of Institution						F value	P value
	Government (N=166)		Government Aided (N=72)		Private (N=62)			
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Cognitive Style	152.09 ^a	16.511	154.29 ^a	16.043	163.16 ^b	11.635	11.563	0.000**
Communicative Ability in English	160.40	38.692	161.08	33.112	161.58	45.081	2.412	0.091 ^{NS}

The F ratios calculated for overall prospective teachers' cognitive style and communicative ability in English language for Government, Government aided and private college of Education proves that cognitive style with respect to type of educational institutions is exposed and a notable variance between groups in cognitive style is significant at 0.01 level. Further analysis of the cognitive style with respect to type of institutions tested through Duncan Multiple Range Test reported that prospective teachers studying in government and private, government aided and private institutions vary significantly with each other in cognitive style. From the mean scores, it is found that prospective teachers studying at private college of education are having better cognitive style than prospective teachers studying in government and government aided colleges of Education.

But, in the case of communication ability in English language, it is inferred no significant difference is found among the different type of institutions. This infers that the prospective teachers studying in government, government aided and private institutions have similar communicative ability in English.

Hence the formulated hypothesis that there is significant difference in cognitive style among Prospective Teachers with respect to type of institution is rejected. But the framed hypothesis with respect to communicative ability in English is accepted.

CONCLUSION:

This research on the Cognitive style helps understanding and appreciating individual differences in cognitive style and communicative ability in English is crucial for optimizing human potential. English language has benefited every branch of science, technology and literature etc. English has now occupied a crucial place in the minds and hearts of ordinary people especially in those of rural students. By tailoring educational approaches, leadership styles, and workplace environments to accommodate diverse styles, we can foster greater efficiency, creativity, and overall well-being.

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